

THE CHRISTIAN SCHEME OF SALVATION.

A COURSE OF LECTURES TO EDUCATED NATIVES OF INDIA,
DELIVERED IN ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL, CALCUTTA,
IN 1865.

BY

SIX OF THE CALCUTTA CLERGY.

CALCUTTA :

PUBLISHED BY MESSRS. R. C. LEPAGE AND CO.

1866.

BISHOP'S COLLEGE PRESS

MDCCCLXVI.

PREFACE.



IN this Second Course of Lectures to Educated Natives an attempt has been made to enter more into the character of the Christian Religion than on the last occasion, when the evidences and the removal of difficulties were chiefly dwelt upon. It will be observed in the sketch given on the following page, that a plan runs through the course. Attention having been awakened in the first lecture to the importance of the enquiry, the doctrine of the Holy Trinity in Unity as revealed in the Bible is unfolded with reference to its connexion with the Christian scheme. The special work of the Second and the Third Persons in the Godhead, in the redemption of the world and the sanctification of the church, is entered upon by the third and fourth lecturers. The use of prayer in seeking to attain to the knowledge of these sacred truths, and to frame the life accordingly: and the consummation of the whole in the resurrection of the body and the final judgment are the topics of the two lectures which close the course.

It is earnestly hoped that many of the Educated Natives, besides those who heard these lectures delivered in the vestibule of the Cathedral, may read them attentively in their homes, and derive some of the benefit the lecturers have desired to communicate in delivering them.

SCHEME OF LECTURES.

Friday, Oct. 27.—The peculiar responsibility of Educated Natives—
and their duty thoughtfully to enquire into the Christian
Scheme of Salvation. *By the* REV. K. M. BANERJEA.

Friday, Nov. 3.—The doctrine of the Holy Trinity in Unity. *By*
ARCHDEACON PRATT.

Friday, Nov. 10.—Redemption. *By the* REV. J. VAUGHAN.

Friday, Nov. 17.—Holiness. *By the* REV. J. WELLAND.

Friday, Nov. 24.—Prayer. *By the* REV. T. SKELTON.

Friday, Dec. 1.—The Resurrection of the Body. *By the* REV.
S. DYSON.

THE PECULIAR RESPONSIBILITY
OF
EDUCATED NATIVES
AND
THEIR DUTY THOUGHTFULLY TO INQUIRE
INTO THE
CHRISTIAN SCHEME OF SALVATION

A LECTURE TO EDUCATED NATIVES
DELIVERED IN ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL
ON FRIDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1865.

BY
REV. K. M. BANERJEA.
SECOND PROFESSOR OF BISHOP'S COLLEGE
MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF EXAMINERS FORTWILLIAM.

CALCUTTA:
MESSRS. R. C. LEPAGE & CO.

1865.

BISHOP'S COLLEGE PRESS.

MDCCCLXV.

A LECTURE
ON THE
PECULIAR RESPONSIBILITY OF EDUCATED
NATIVES—AND THEIR DUTY THOUGHT-
FULLY TO INQUIRE INTO THE CHRIS-
TIAN SCHEME OF SALVATION.



“UNTO whomsoever much is given of him shall be much required : and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.” These words from the lips of one whom the whole world acknowledges to have spoken with a wisdom which no other man ever exhibited, teach a most important lesson. It is a maxim, no less of Scripture than of the common sense of humanity, that every advantage creates a corresponding responsibility, and where the advantage is enjoyed, and the responsibility unheeded or undischarged, the sentence of condemnation is pronounced by the ethical jurist as decisively and as solemnly as by the doctor of Revealed religion. Talents neglected, knowledge unimproved, opportunities thrown away, good impressions resisted, or unheeded, and therefore ultimately effaced, are universally held to be as culpable as abuse of deposits and betrayal of trusts.

Now educated natives have a peculiar responsibility because they are in possession of peculiar advantages. I must mention some of these advantages in order to show the gravity of their responsibility. Natives may be generally classed as Hindus or Mahometans. I shall first and chiefly speak of the Hindus as by far the much larger class of the two.

But before proceeding to mention the peculiar advantages of which educated Hindus are in possession, it is necessary to understand what class of Hindus is called *educated*. All persons are here agreed that an educated Hindu may not be a *learned* Hindu, nor does the term mean a mere learned Pandit. A mere learned Pandit never lays claim to the appellation of an educated Hindu. In no civilized country are learning and education considered synonymous, and in no community is the distinction more clearly understood or more jealously kept in view than in the community of the Hindus. Thirty years ago the distinction was forced on the notice of the Supreme Government itself. It was warmly discussed

by the rulers of the country on the question of the correct appropriation of the Education Fund. Some contended that the Fund ought to be mainly devoted to the encouragement of Oriental literature. Others maintained that it would be a profanation of the term education to confound it with instruction in false narratives, and systems of science experimentally proved to be incorrect. An elaborate minute from Lord Macaulay brought the question to a determination, and a Resolution of the Governor General in Council recognized and vindicated the broad distinction between education and mere learning. No mistaking the terms now. All parties understand what is education and what is mere learning. An educated Hindu can no more be confounded with a mere learned Pandit than he can be mistaken for an Arabic Mollah.

An educated Hindu then means one who has been instructed in the literature, science, and history of Europe. Mark now his peculiar advantages—advantages not possessed by the rest of his countrymen. The most learned of his forefathers and predecessors knew of no country in the world but their own home, nor of any period of time but that in which they themselves lived. Their geography was but the topography of the towns and villages which they had occasion to frequent, and their history consisted of certain legends of India, in which their poets had tried their skill in versification, and which hireling or mendicant bards recited in the courts of their princes. Their knowledge of science was lower than is exhibited in the smallest schools of our day. Their literary recreations consisted in solutions of difficult grammatical problems, and in the jingle of words without ideas. Not that they were wholly devoid of active exercises of the imagination, and many a poet was a host in himself. Nor were their conceptions of moral good to be set at naught. Brilliant ideas, lofty views, elevated sentiments are interspersed in their writings, but there is neither moral harmony nor philosophical consistency in their thoughts. With the same breath they would give utterance to ideas which the most enlightened Christian would not be ashamed to adopt, and disgrace themselves with expressions which the most besotted buffoon of our day would scorn to use. The most self-denying of their divine personifications, who had conquered the very incarnation of sensuality, was himself always under the influence of deleterious drugs and intoxicating drinks—tippling about at the head of unclean spirits and goblins—the patron god of Daityas and Rākshases.

Of history, of geography, of experimental facts, of the moral harmony of human nature, the masters of Sanscrit lore had no conception. For HISTORY there is not even a word in the language. Translators into the vernacular are obliged to adopt some approximate expression to do duty for *history*, and, as tastes differ, several

terms have been thus impressed to give utterance to that one idea. The Sanseritized mind will either receive every legend without discrimination, or reject every fact for which he has not the evidence of his own senses. He cannot believe in the past history of Alexander the Great or William the Conqueror, if he be challenged to make good his faith in the ten heads and twenty arms of Ravana, or in the production of the moon by the churning of the Ocean.

Such for three thousand years and upwards has been the servile state of the orthodox Brahminical mind. It has continued in a stagnant state of torpor, exhibiting throughout this long period only that infantine activity of the human mind, which at one time had its parallel in the legendary period of ancient Greece, but which with the Brahmins had not been able to attain the advanced stage even of Herodotus, Xenophon, or Thucydides. It was but little affected by its contact with Mahometanism, which was itself linked with a literature and system which discarded the freedom of thought and investigation. But it has since been called upon by circumstances to encounter a movement, which though not actually originating with Lord Macaulay, received from him its strongest and most effective impetus.

The result of that movement is the creation of a new school—the large and fast increasing community of the *educated Hindus*. Carefully trained from early life in the contemplation of facts, not as they are recited by bards or asserted by dogmatists, but as they are established by evidence, familiar with the inductive method of reasoning, freely admitted to the marvels of experimental science and of philosophy deduced from ascertained verities, the educated Hindus have in a few years unlearned the delusions of centuries, and got a clue to the discovery of truths which in no other community on the face of the globe has ever been known to be obtainable in so short a space of time.

And this I call a great advantage. Such mental emancipation from the thralldom of ages—such an escape from errors and delusions which had from time immemorial penetrated the inmost recesses of the national mind appears almost miraculous. Fifty years ago one could hardly have believed the possibility of such a change. That Hindus would so soon unlearn the prejudices of ages—prejudices under the influence of which they had combatted and banished such a powerful system as Buddhism and had resisted the proselytising sword of Mahometanism—that without the use of force or fraud, and in spite of the reverence politically expressed even by Christian rulers, until a recent date, for some of their idols and temples, they would in a manner disenthroned their legendary gods under rational conviction, could not have been anticipated by the most sanguine advocates of human progress. And yet we see the fact in our days. We see numbers reclaimed from those inveterate

prejudices—capable of elevated thoughts and enlarged views, and anxious for the extermination of errors of which it was once feared the Hindu mind could never be relieved.

And do not advantages so incalculable entail a corresponding responsibility in the sight of God? Verily *unto whomsoever much is given from him shall much be required.* Consider only the magnitude of the advantage which the simple gift of historical knowledge has imparted to you. You have at once obtained the experience of ages. You have got a view which in point of space ranges as far as the utmost limits of the earth, and in point of time embraces all periods to the very dawn of authentic history. To you has been committed a mass of correct information, regarding the present and the past, which no learned pundit could extract from his own resources. The responsibility which the possession of this mass of knowledge entails can only be discharged by a careful contemplation of the facts thus brought to notice, with a view to personal and national improvement, and by guarding against abuses which listlessness, indolence, or vanity may induce. Among the facts thus brought to light by the study of history is the great fact of the Christian religion, and although in consequence of the peculiar policy of the Education Department this fact may not have been completely studied by you, yet what you *have* studied makes it obligatory on you to supplement deficiencies by means of further inquiry, and to improve for your own and your country's welfare the knowledge you have already obtained. Compared with your uneducated countrymen you have known, and you can understand, much with reference to the dealings of God, which they neither know nor can understand. The physical sciences have taught you that the rites and ceremonies on which they rely for the soul's salvation are great delusions. This is only negative knowledge, but still of great value. And concurrently with this teaching of physical science, the study of History, however imperfect on this particular point from the circumstances of the case, has nevertheless presented for your contemplation a general outline of the fact that for the soul's salvation a way was propounded, in an age most remarkable as a period of authentic History, which commended itself to the belief of the highest intellects of all succeeding ages, and which no one has been able to disprove. Such a general outline of the introduction and expansion of the Christian religion, no one, instructed in Ancient and Modern History, can possibly ignore. The educated Hindu has his eyes opened by the lessons of physical science to the errors and delusions of his predecessors, and he has also obtained from the study of History a rudimental knowledge of that which can fill up the vacancy caused by the removal of those errors and delusions. He has then a twofold advantage over the rest of his

countrymen. He has found out the delusive nature of those rites and ceremonies on which *they* are relying for their salvation, and he has got a clue to that wherein lies the soul's real safety. His education has in the first instance performed a destructive task—sustained the office of the sapper and miner—discharged the duty of exploding the works of idolatrous untruth. But if it has thus driven him from the delusive shelter of error, it has not left him without a guide to a post of safety. If physical science has destroyed his old faith, the study of History has promised and pointed out to him a new belief founded on authenticated facts—a *reasonable service*, consisting in the presentation, not of flowers and incense, but of one's own self, a *living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God*. This is the constructive department of his education, which though not completed within the walls of Government institutions, has even there attained a stage of progress in which the alumni can now by their own efforts supplement the incidental deficiencies. And the great responsibility which attaches at the present moment to the position of the educated Hindu, is, in other words, to complete his education; to bring to its natural development the grand disclosure of History with reference to the advent of Christ, and not by a stand-still indolence to let the seed thus sown in his mind be either destroyed or choked or withered; not to let the idea (*anno DOMINI*) of the very era which he uses in dating his correspondence dwindle down into an unreality by sheer listlessness; not to injure the sacred cause of education by simply exhibiting her destructive office and ignoring her constructive lessons; not to teach the Indian world that physical science demolishes idolatry, without at the same time proclaiming aloud that History testifies to Christianity.

I am not here attempting to lead you blindfold to the adoption of my own opinions. I am only supposing that state of mind in you which education ought to produce, and deducing from it certain conclusions as to your duty. I do not wish you to adopt any opinions at my bidding. My published intention to-night is simply to contend for the duty "*thoughtfully to inquire into the Christian scheme of salvation*," a duty imposed on you by your very standing as educated Hindus. You are men who have discovered certain errors on which you had staked your abiding interests, and have been pointed to a new way promising to guide you safe unto eternity. You have been roused from a fatal security—no small advantage in itself—and the same voice which has thus roused you points you also to a surer path—to *the way, the truth and the life*. Have you no duty under such circumstances? If you are sitting on explosive ground, you will of course start up the moment you are warned, and make an attempt to move. But where will you go? will you again take up a position hap-hazard, or at the mere

ipse dixit of some foreign infidel? Will you not at least reconnoitre the post of safety pointed out by the same voice which warned you of your danger? Will you accept only the physical department of your education which tells you that the sun, moon, and planets are mere material bodies, and not living persons to be relied on as guides to eternal felicity, and will you reject without attentive examination the Historical department which teaches you as a faithful saying that *Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners*?

I do not believe that any one can seriously maintain such a position. I cannot conceive the possibility of an educated man categorically asserting that physical science is to be implicitly believed and the lessons of History to be set aside. Further examination may be allowed, or even necessary, in both departments. There may be theories of the one requiring a more minute scrutiny, and lessons of the other calling for closer investigation. This is a fair issue, and it is the thoughtful and patient trial of this very issue for which I contend tonight. I say that since history in its most authentic form assigns dates and places, and declares that an extraordinary person was sent from above to do that for the souls of men for which the sons of men had heretofore relied on vain idols and images, educated men are challenged to try this fact, to apply to it the tests which they usually apply to historical narratives, to examine the evidence offered, and consider how far the narrative is sustained by credible witnesses,—credible both for their ability and integrity,—ability, inseparable from opportunities of noticing the events,—and integrity, deducible from absence of interested motives and from the manner of the record. Examine the record as a judicial officer would examine the record of a great case, involving vast interests, and come to your verdict dispassionately, and according to the rules of historical evidence.

Consider how vast the interest is which is involved in the issue. If the fact of Christianity be true, it is a truth which concerns all men. For what are its allegations? It professes to be the one effectual cure for the perils of human nature, the one never-failing supply for the cravings of our race. *Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.* This was a saying of the Founder of Christianity. If true, it just supplies the desideratum for which Kapila speculated in vain, when by a process of exhaustion he successively rejected the popular remedies for the ills of our nature, in consequence of their insufficiency and transitoriness.

The question, I say, concerns all men. *For if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of*

I may here be told that educated Hindus have not been neglectful of the concerns of their souls—that, though forced out of the strongholds of idolatry by the disclosures of physical science, they have found a resting place in Brahmoism—that there is nothing in the education they have received which can make this new position untenable—and that until Brahmoism can be disproved, they are not called upon to investigate the claims of Christianity except as a matter of philosophical curiosity. Such sayings I have both heard and read of. I have great esteem for those who hold these tenets, and I may add that some of them are near and dear to me as friends and relatives. It is quite in keeping with the object of this lecture that I should make some remarks on Brahmoism, and I can safely assure my friends that whatever I may say is the utterance of love and affection.

Brahmoism is a vague term and the system indicated by it is equally undefined. It would be childish to quarrel with a name, although even a name may often be deceptive both to those who assume it and to the community at large. But in proceeding to criticise the term *Bráhma*, I may shelter myself under the ægis of a maxim, inculcated only last week in the pages of the weekly which is published under the auspices of the original *Brahma Sabha*—the orthodox and conservative branch of the school which first adopted this appellation. “There should be, says the editor of the *National paper*, some reasons, some shape of reason at least, for calling things by the names that are respectively attached to each.” I quite concur in this sentiment, and I ask what reason is, was, or could there be for the adoption of the term *Bráhma* by rejectors of Revelation? *Bráhma* differs no more from *Brahmin*, than the English word *peaceful* from *peaceable*. What is its etymology, what its meaning? I know it is derived from ब्रह्मन् *Brahman*—but *Brahman*, in what sense?

Brahman neuter, or *Brahman* masculine? If *Brahman* neuter, does it mean the *Veda*, a *vedic* hymn, or the inactive divinity who is the patron of pantheism? If *Brahman* masculine, it can only mean a follower or worshipper of the legendary god ब्रह्मा *Brahmá*, a character of no good fame in the *Sastras*. I suppose the *Bráhmos* must derive their name from *Brahman* neuter. It is not for me to put any interpretation of the word into the mouth of my friends which may be open to censure. Had there been any innocent meaning, I would gladly have accepted it. But the only meanings which the term can admit are two: *learned in the Veda*, or *initiated in the doctrine of the pantheistic divinity*. The word as applied to the members of the *Brahma Sabha* of old, had some significance, for they really professed the *Vedantic* doctrine which it implied. As a badge of profession for the existing *Brahmos*, it appears to me vague and deceptive—and is likely to be understood in a *Brahminical* sense.

And the system indicated by it is equally undefined. As to its positive doctrines regarding the existence of the Supreme Being, the immortality of the soul, the duty of devotion and of personal piety, the Brahmos can hold nothing more than we ourselves hold. But as Christianity is a fact in authentic history, we maintain that their system requires to be supplemented by what will appear to be important additional truths on calm inquiry into the Christian scheme of salvation.

As to the negative part of their system, denying the possibility of Revelation or maintaining the all sufficiency of intuition, I must hope that they do not seriously countenance such a doctrine. In the denial of the possibility of Revelation is involved an idea which I must hope the Brahmos detest no less than ourselves—an idea which sets limits to God's power and denies His omnipotence. Why should the prerogative of the Supreme Being be thus curtailed? I must hope that whatever they may have said on this point, they said, not in denial of God's power of revealing His will to mankind in a supernatural way, but in defence of the moral sense of human nature which they supposed to have been undervalued by Christian disputants. As to their doctrine of the sufficiency of intuition, I can only say that it appears to me to be inconsistent with the modesty which becomes human nature. With our countless defects of the understanding, can we say we already know all that is necessary, or that our own resources are sufficient, and we need no extra help from God?

But the proper issue is the question of the Christian narrative. Is it authentic? Is it based on facts? Speculations, inferences, guesses, must be held in abeyance until the fact is examined on its direct evidence. Speculations must give place to stern facts. Inferences must bow before direct evidence. What would you say of a judge whose verdict was based on inference to the disregard of unimpeached direct evidence? In legal language it would be called a verdict *against* the evidence on the record, and as such would be liable to be set aside even by those who otherwise could not interfere with a decision on *facts*.

The Brahmos then must hold their speculations and inferences in abeyance until they have examined the direct evidence of the Christian narrative. As educated men they cannot consistently halt where the disclosures of physical science have left them. They must advance further under the guidance of history, and inquire into the Christian scheme of salvation, to which History points as the only safe post for the soul's salvation—our only protection from the influences and consequences of our frail and corrupt nature.

I have heard it said that we Christians have no feeling for our country or our race, and that our adoption of the Christian religion is an act of treachery to India and her institutions, both ancient and

modern. On this point I am somewhat thin skinned, and I feel such a charge the more keenly because it has a cruel edge, and because it appears plausible to many unthinking men whose good will I nevertheless value and would secure. I think I could prove to any jury of educated Hindoos that the charge is utterly unfounded; that we Christians have never, in a religious point of view, renounced any of India's institutions, which they themselves do not denounce as idolatrous; and that in a political or social point of view, Christianity dictates no peculiar practices. Educated Hindus and ourselves may both have, under the impulse of what may be called Progress, introduced innovations in life and manners. But in these respects we are as much open to correction as they, and surely the Christian religion does not inculcate any particular social system as necessary to the salvation of the soul in supersession of others that may be innocent in themselves.

In one respect, however, I can boldly say that we can and do honor and sympathize with our race more than the Brahmos or other non-Christian educated Hindoos. By denying the fact or possibility of a Revelation and the mysterious doctrine that without shedding of blood there is no remission, they by implication utterly denounce our old Rishis and our primitive forefathers as blind fanatics, practising certain unmeaning rites and ceremonies without any foundation in fact. The Brahmos might consistently with their doctrines consign to eternal oblivion the whole of India's vast antiquity with one fell sweep. We however, as Christians, set a positive value on that antiquity. We would not on any account allow to be forgotten many precepts on which our Rishis relied for their salvation. We believe that many of their dearly cherished maxims had a foundation in fact—in primitive practices which they had inherited from Noah—in events which occurred before the dispersion of mankind. When our forefathers taught स्वर्गकामो यजेत *let him who desires heaven perform sacrifices*—or when they maintained नित्यस्तु स्याद्दर्शनस्य परार्थत्वात् *sound or oral revelation is eternal or was coeval with the creation for the supreme good, or for the benefit of others, i. e. man and his posterity*—we do not call them reveries, or wild sayings for which no reason could be assigned. We maintain on the contrary that they were recollections however faint of primitive practice and primitive revelation. To us they are like fossils testifying to the sacred history of Christianity. The maxims were founded in primitive truth. The Vedic precept about sacrifice was but an echo of that divine communication in obedience to which Noah builded his altar and offered his burnt offering. We therefore cherish the recollections of our Rishis as precious relics, and we believe that as Christians we tread the very steps which they would have taken had they lived in our age, and with the ideas of the Vedic age

fresh in their minds, had heard of the events which occurred in Judea in the reign of Tiberius Cæsar.

In this sense we are better patriots than the Brahmos. The Brahmos care nothing for India's ancient ideas and practices, notwithstanding their designation. We value and care for some of those ideas and practices at least, and can sympathize with the Rishis in the importance they attached to sacrificial rites. We receive it as a divine ordinance that *without shedding of blood there is no remission*—and we believe our Rishis had the same notion in its outline. The Brahmos, again, rejecting the idea of a Revelation, are apt to consider the old Brahminical maxims as wild speculations—we are enabled to assign some reason for those speculations and to cover the nakedness of our fathers by the sacred mantle of primitive truth. The Brahmos, in fine, sympathize more with the modern infidels of Europe than with the old Rishis of India, and under that foreign influence they reject the two great principles of theology, which our forefathers of the Vedic age, theistic as well as atheistic, cherished most dearly: the principles of Revelation and of Sacrifice. It is the same two principles which form the basis of Christian doctrine—and I feel that in advocating that doctrine my creed is much nearer that of the Vedic age than the creed of those who renounce the principles of Revelation and the Atonement.

But these protestations will perhaps fall flat if I do not notice a complaint of which I have heard in various quarters and which it would be injustice, no less to the truth itself than to my auditors, to ignore or burk. It is said that while we profess only to convert and disavow the office of proselytising, we are in reality fond not of converting but of proselytising; that we are not content with preaching and teaching and administering the means of grace, but also busily interfere between parents and children, and encourage the latter to run away from the former in open defiance of the natural law embodied in the 5th commandment of our own decalogue; that we glory in receiving run-away boys and children, and persist in harbouring them against the protests of their parents—implying thereby that we fail to influence grown up and independent men, who would not change their residence but might only be converts without swelling the number of followers arrayed in our compounds, and that we practically deal only with boys who come over to our barracks, and literally become *proselytes*—deserting their wives and parents without notice, and undergoing all the material changes in the mode of living which such local removal renders necessary and natural. Complaints such as these I have heard from various parties whom I hold in great esteem. Standing however in this place to propound principles and not to decide facts, I will neither deny nor acknowledge these charges. I shall only state on the other hand what I have heard some missionaries say

in reply. They say that young converts leave their homes because they would not be suffered to remain there as Christians—that missionaries give them protection because otherwise they would be houseless, or kept in imprisonment by their relatives, or perhaps be drugged to insanity or death. I have already said I do not stand here as a judge of facts where charges and recriminations are made. But I will make a confession as regards my own acts. More than thirty years ago I myself thought that young men ought to be protected when they left their parents' homes with a view to embrace Christianity and I acted accordingly. I considered such young men as repudiated and expelled by their natural guardians though I knew some of them had come by stealth. I never believed they would be actually imprisoned—still less did I apprehend drugging or poisoning—but I thought that if they returned back to their parents, they would gradually submit to the persuasions of their relatives and give up the faith. Such were my impressions thirty years ago. Within the last twenty years however those impressions have been considerably modified. I feel we had been taking too carnal and Judaizing a view of the blessed Gospel, and had almost ignored its spiritual character and influences. Christianity does not require a young convert to abandon his natural guardians, or steal away from his home, nor has any one a right to call a fugitive convert, a *persecuted man*, unless he is actually expelled from his home. I cannot believe that in the present state of society with all the improvements in the Bengal police there can actually be a case of real imprisonment or drugging. I can understand a young man being for a time simply prohibited by a parent to leave the house, and he reluctantly submitting with or without a remonstrance. But I do not think he would take much harm if he so far gratified his father's feelings. If without risking a breach of the 1st and 2nd Commandments, a young man can avoid a breach of the 5th, I cannot conceive he would thereby become a spiritual sufferer. His house would only prove to him a Patmos under the circumstances. He might at any rate profitably employ his time in instructing and influencing his wife, instead of deserting her without notice. I declare that no one, certainly not a young convert, ought voluntarily to betake himself to a place of temptation, but a parent's roof cannot without irreverence be *assumed* as such. No one can without a mockery of religion cast such a slur on the house where he was born—where the providence of God supplied him food, and where the preventing grace of God produced in his mind those *first impressions* which afterwards ripened into conversion. The same grace which commenced the good work while the convert was yet a domiciliary in his parental abode, can surely complete it without the necessity of his removing to a mission premises. I think therefore that if there is any reality in a young man's

conversion, he can be trusted to the keeping of God's grace in his natural abode, and that it must betoken a want of faith *somewhere*, if he cannot be advised to remain where the grace of God first found him. We, Christian ministers, had better confine ourselves to our proper work—teaching, preaching, and administering the sacraments—and not busy ourselves with the question of material shelter, unless indeed we find any one actually expelled by his parents or natural guardians, and be called upon to perform to our converts those offices which the District Charitable Society does to the community at large. Nor must we forget that it is precisely on the question of material temporalities that missionaries and their converts have often been known to exchange angry words.

But while I am not bound as a Christian minister—and therefore I feel I ought not—to encourage or instigate a young man to run away from his father's roof, the young man himself ought not to be summarily deprived of his discretion, where he can lawfully use it, of living in a separate house from his father if can do so on his own resources. That is a question of personal liberty between father and son quite apart from the intervention of a Christian minister. The Christian religion itself while it insists on faith and baptism lays down no rule about housing and feeding the convert. It does not require any one to leave his abode, or to break the 5th commandment on the question of house or food. Whether the non-Christian father will eventually expel a converted son is a question which I would not entertain in anticipation of the fact.

I have never heard of a father actually expelling his son on the score of conversion, and, considering the present relaxed rules of Bengali society with reference to caste, I cannot see anything in a young man's change of mind, or his baptism, which must necessarily prevent a father from maintaining him in the house. The young man on his part ought not to give needless offence, nor introduce in a house, of which he has not yet become the master, such innovations in food and habits as may be offensive to his fellow-domiciliaries. I do not see why simple Christianity cannot be tolerated in a Hindoo's house when it was suffered in Caesar's household. When a young convert has finished his education and become independent, he may of his own accord find it more convenient for himself to have a house of his own—but while he must be a protege of some party in regard to food and raiment, he ought not to give up his father's protection unless he is actually expelled. The legend of Prahlad is here replete with instruction. He was a convert to Vaishnavism, of which his royal father was a determined opponent. He never irritated or insulted his father by unnecessary manifestoes, but whenever questioned, he confessed his faith

and submitted to every infliction. He never however ran away from his father who, as the story has it, was ultimately destroyed by the very god that had saved the youthful convert from the effects of the Daitya's rage. Why then may not Christian Prahlads maintain their faith under parental roofs?

Reverting now to the thesis of the lecture, I call upon all educated Hindoos seriously to consider the claims of Christianity. I do not ask them to leave their homes or their relatives. I know Christianity itself demands no such sacrifice. When I say, *Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ*—or when I add, *Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus*—I know there is nothing in these precepts which will disqualify you for maintaining your social positions. Dismiss from your minds those apprehensions which may have been caused by the *past accidents* of conversion. We do not want proselytes—we do not ask any one to change his residence and come to our premises—but we desire conversions—we wish that men should rely on Christ for their salvation and adopt the means of grace he has recommended. There is nothing in these acts which are contradictory to the ordinary social rules of Hinduism. I feel many are deterred by groundless fears and apprehensions. I am therefore anxious to impress on your minds the great distinction which exists between the necessary requirements of Christianity, and the conveniences and expediencies of secular concerns. The first imposes no great burden if you assent to Christian truth. Verily *the yoke of Christ is easy and his burden light*. The second is entirely a discretionary question in which every man's will is his own law.

But I must now address a few words to that class of educated natives who are of the Mahometan persuasion. I cannot say that that the disclosures of physical science have produced on you any effects hostile to your faith. But you have received an insight into the great principles of historic evidence of which mere Mahometan scholars have no idea. I think it is not an unreasonable demand to desire you to make a proper use of that advantage in the consideration of religious truth. As Mahometans you believe that the New Testament or *Injil* contains a revelation from God. That is a doctrine of your own Koran. But while allowing the prophetic office of Christ, you shrink from the peculiar doctrines of the New Testament and reject the mediatorial office of our Saviour. Here is an inconsistency which educated men should not ignore. Mahometan doctors are not insensible of this inconsistency, but they get rid of the difficulty by maintaining that the New Testament which we produce is not the true *Injil*—that the true *Injil* does not contain the doctrine which we preach, and that ours is but a forged *Injil*. This is an allegation on the part of

your divines which narrows the issue between Christians and Mahometans to one simple question: Is the New Testament which we produce the genuine work of the apostles and evangelists, designated in the Koran by the term *Injil*, or is our Testament a corrupt forgery? This is an issue of fact which may be fairly discussed by educated men to the exclusion of all those angry debates in which hard words have often been exchanged between Christians and Mahometans. The question must be considered as a historical fact with the light of historical criticism, and here let us begin with inquiring when this charge of forgery was first preferred against the Christian Church, and on what grounds? For six long centuries no suspicion of the kind was suggested by friend or foe—Pagan or heretic. The accusation was brought for the first time in the seventh century—but on what grounds? No historical or critical grounds at all. It was a mere arbitrary assumption to which the advocates of Mahometanism had recourse in order to maintain their opposition to the peculiar doctrines of a Revelation which they could not ignore. The charge is therefore not tenable for a moment. But since I would not here be content with merely putting the accuser out of court, or even with a verdict of *not proven*—since I am anxious to secure a judgment of *disproof* of such an accusation, I must urge on the consideration of the educated Mahometan these further considerations. Numerous citations of and references to New Testament passages in the works of a long series of authors from the very age of the apostles, directly prove the Testament which is now in our hands to be the genuine *Injil*. The testimony of all ancient writers both Christian and Pagan shows that the New Testament doctrines, rejected by the Mahometans, were always held in the Christian Church from the very time of Christ. In the discussions occasioned by the many heresies which had arisen before the time of Mahomet, all parties appealed to the very Testament which we produce, and there was no suggestion of wholesale forgery thrown out from any side. The various translations of the Scriptures in different languages, executed in the early ages, precluded the possibility of such forgery by turning the New Testament into a sort of *registered document*. All these considerations must prove to educated men that the New Testament cannot be a forgery and that it is the only *Injil* ever given to the world.

The reception of Christian doctrine is therefore a necessary duty on the part of an educated Mahometan. But this may be regarded as a *reductio ad absurdum*—how can a Mahometan receive on the credit of the Koran a doctrine denounced by the Koran itself? It is the Koran, however, that is alone chargeable with this absurdity. Of course both cannot be true. We shall therefore have to frame a new issue and brave a bolder question. Since the *Injil* and the Koran cannot both be true, because of the latter rejecting the doctrine of

the former—which is a real revelation from God? The Koran having already admitted the divine authority of the Injil might here be precluded from again controverting it—but we shall not rest satisfied with a mere estoppel against our adversary—we shall proceed to evidence, and call for a judgement on the merits of the question. And here the direct and other evidences, to which we have already made reference as addressing educated Hindus, must be attended to by educated Mahometans. Those evidences will sufficiently demonstrate the truth of Christianity, and the Christian revelation being thus an authenticated fact, which Mahomet himself could not deny, and the Koran itself admitted, if the same Koran is again found to be opposed to its peculiar doctrine, the Koran and not the Gospel must be renounced as untrue. Nor can this conclusion be rebutted by any evidence which can be cited for the Koran, for the Koran has no evidence, and is indignant at the very call for evidence. Mahomet did not—would not—and could not manifest any proofs or signs of divine commission. The only proof to which the Koran appeals is its matter. It says “This Koran could not have been composed by any except God.” “Will they say Mahomet has forged it? Answer. Bring therefore a chapter like unto it: and call whom ye may to your assistance, besides God, if ye speak truth.”* Educated men will perhaps pardon me if I contend that this sort of self-complaisant gratulation, however suitable before an assembly of rude Arabians of the 7th century, ill accords with the development of men’s intellectual powers in an age of Railways and Electric telegraphs.

I say then to educated Mahometans, let the acknowledgment of Jesus Christ and of the New Testament by your prophet be duly pondered in your minds. You cannot entertain the puerile idea of the New Testament being a forged Injil. If then you follow out the principles on which your prophet, certainly raised as a great reformer of his day,—addressed your predecessors, while Pagans, at Mecca or Medina, you cannot with the light you have received from History halt where he halted, or continue in the evidently inconsistent position of acknowledging the Injil, and yet denying its peculiar dogmas. Mahomet could not deny the past revelations of God, but the gross polytheism by which he was surrounded led him to deny the most important doctrines of those revelations. You may under better auspices press forward and supply his deficiencies. You may complete the great work of religious revival by restoring those doctrines, and contend for the real teaching of Hazrat Isa without detracting from his majesty and glory—the glory as of the only begotten of the Father full of grace and truth, as the Injil saith.

* Sale’s Koran.

In conclusion I again address myself to all educated natives—Hindus as well as Mahometans. You have received from your liberal education advantages which have not fallen to the lot of the ordinary members of your several communities. Your experience has been enlarged by your education in History, and you can survey at a glance all that God has done from the creation of the world. Let not the lessons of this experience be lost to you on the most momentous of all questions—the question of the soul's salvation. An awful responsibility attaches to every man in reference to this question—and still more awfully so to those who have been blessed with talents, not in the possession of the ordinary populace. He who does not make a right use of such talents, abuses them. The abuser of his talents runs a fearful risk—the risk of forfeiting God's blessing. *For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance : but from him that hath not—i. e. has corrupted or lost by misuse—shall be taken away even that which he hath.*

An old English reformer thus speaks of the awful day of judgment : “Each man shall yield reckoning of the keeping of his own soul. For if a king had a daughter like to himself, to whom he thought to give dignity and worship, and took her to any of his realm to keep : the more negligent that man were about her keeping, the stricter reckoning the king would ask of him for her. What then shall the King of heaven do to him to whom he hath committed a daughter most like to himself, that is to say man's soul ; the much loved daughter of this King, and ordained to great honor in the bliss of heaven, if this man keep her recklessly.” This responsibility lies on us all, and the primary use of education is to assist in the due discharge of this responsibility.

I say then neglect not the way of the soul's improvement which Christianity, attested by history and approved by infallible signs, promises to present you. Halt not at intuition or a half reform while history points out a divine way capable of guiding you unto all truth. Beware of one of our own maxims of old : *Dig not wells or pools of stagnant water while an inexhaustible stream of fresh water appears within a few yards.*

Any one who surveys human nature as it is will easily perceive that it is in a state of moral disorganisation. It appears as a wreck of something that was once great and glorious. “A worm—a god”—said the poet. Grovelling on the dust and yet with high aspirations that can only be satisfied with perfect sanctity and bliss. If there be a moral Governor of the universe, there must be a mode of restoration—a way of renewal, a means of regeneration. Christianity professes to supply the means. Christianity describes the disease exactly as we find it, and promises to find a remedy. The physician who understands the pathology may surely be trusted with the treatment of the malady. On a survey of the diseased state

of human nature, the man must be lost to all moral sense who could hesitate to join in the plaintive cry—*Is there no healing balm in Gilead—is there no physician there?* The Christian narrative, authenticated by History, responds to the cry—points out the balm and the physician. Who would not call this the *Gospel*—the glad tidings of salvation? Who can with any moral sensibility hear the call, unconcerned and uninterested: *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden—and I will give you rest.* All are agreed that human nature requires renovation—a renewal. Christianity supplies the desideratum—and as it is founded in fact, it has a right to our eager reception and cordial assent. Every man is interested in the announcement: *If any man be in Christ he is a new creature: old things are passed away, behold all things are become new.* “Oh taste and see that the Lord is good.”

THE DOCTRINE OF
THE HOLY TRINITY IN UNITY,
AND ITS CONNEXION WITH
THE CHRISTIAN SCHEME OF SALVATION.

A LECTURE TO EDUCATED NATIVES OF INDIA
DELIVERED IN SAINT PAUL'S CATHEDRAL, CALCUTTA
ON FRIDAY NOVEMBER 3, 1865.

BY
JOHN. H. PRATT, M. A.
ARCHDEACON OF CALCUTTA

CALCUTTA:
MESSRS. R. C. LEPAGE & Co.

1865.

BISHOP'S COLLEGE PRESS.

MCCCCLXV.

A LECTURE

ON

THE DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY TRINITY IN UNITY AND ITS CONNEXION WITH THE CHRISTIAN SCHEME OF SALVATION.



THE subject I have to discourse upon this evening is one of so sacred and transcendental a nature, that it becomes me to approach it with deep reverence and solemn awe. Well may I invoke, as I have invoked, the aid of that Almighty Being, whose revelation of Himself to us in the Bible I am to set before you, that He would keep me from speaking unadvisedly and feebly on such a topic. May He now guide my words, and also help you to fix your thoughts seriously on the things you will hear.

2. True religion must be based upon a knowledge of the Divine Being. But who can declare the nature and character of that

Necessity
of an external
Revelation.

Divine Being except Himself? Our own thoughts upon such a subject must partake of the finite character of our own minds.

How can a finite being aspire to the hope of discovering the Infinite? The thought is preposterous. "Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection? It is as high as heaven, what canst thou do? deeper than hell, what canst thou know?" (Job. 11. 7, 8). And we are in a still worse position than that of being merely finite creatures. How could a fallen sinful being like man, whatever powers he may pretend to, discover the nature and attributes of Him who is perfect holiness?

God has indeed endowed man with great powers. By these he unravels many marvels in the physical and moral world, of which he forms a part; though marvels beyond marvels always rise upon our view the further we carry our investigations into the constitution of things. We can never *reach* the First Great Cause in this way. As the Christian poet has well expressed it, reason, though it has achieved great wonders, cannot reach so high as even the feet only of God's throne, how much less God Himself!

N. B.—Large portions of this Lecture were omitted in the delivery for want of time.

Reason stretches all her wings,
 And soars above the skies ;
 But still how far beneath thy feet,
 Our grovelling reason lies !

3. Some have, however, in their self confidence made the attempt, but, as might be foreseen, to their utter confusion. They have pursued two different methods. In one they begin by announcing certain abstract ideas regarding the Deity, as they conceive Him to be ; and descending from these they aim at deducing their system. The other method is one of induction, and proceeds from an examination of the constitution of the *human* mind—the only example of mind of which they have any knowledge ; and upon this basis they endeavour to build up a theory regarding the nature and attributes of God Himself. Had they succeeded in evolving any tangible scheme, it would have presented but a cold, barren, and merely human view of the Supreme Being, as all the thoughts are the product of the human mind, and could not rise, however great, above the level of their own fountain. The numerous inconsistencies and contradictions which beset these human speculations, not to say their utter insufficiency to meet the wants of man as a sinner needing salvation, have been amply demonstrated—although the highest efforts of the human intellect have been engaged upon them—by the results to which they lead.

There are limits to human thought beyond which it is presumptuous for us to endeavour to venture. “I am a finite being” is the motto which must be inscribed on all such questions. They are beyond our reason: not contradictory to our reason ; but they do not come within the range of our investigations or of the sphere within which our reason acts. They commend themselves to our reason when made known from heaven ; but reason has no power to discover them. “God is infinite, I am finite.” I acquiesce in such a decision. Nay, I feel contented and happy in being conscious of such a relationship. I can know Him only as He reveals Himself to me.

4. The Holy Bible professes to be that revelation. Mysteries there may be in this book which I cannot comprehend. But glad am I to see this. While there is so much made known that fills me with intelligent admiration and so completely meets my wants, I regret not that there are still remaining mysteries. If all was clear to my

The Holy Bible
 is that
 Revelation.

finite capacity, I might begin to doubt the divine origin of the book. A religion without mysteries would carry its own confutation. It would be a temple without a Deity. But here God Himself, who is alone able to give me any knowledge in such matters, reveals much that is intelligible to me. I desire to come, then

to this Infinite God. I am ready to listen to all He tells me. This, my friends, is the state of a right-minded man. He feels the absolute necessity of a revelation, and *that* a revelation independent of himself and one accessible to all who enquire. In this spirit it is that Christians view the Bible as a priceless treasure.

And, when we examine this sacred book, how does the Infinite reveal Himself to us therein?—in terms at once so sublime, when His attributes are alluded to, that no human intellect has ever approached them; in terms so touching and so suitable to our wants, that no philosophy has ever dreamt of such.

5. The course I propose to follow is this :—

FIRST, I will STATE THE DOCTRINE which it is my purpose to set before you to night, as Christians hold it; and I will make a few remarks on the kind of proof which the Holy Bible furnishes.

SECONDLY, I will give THE PROOF ITSELF from the Bible somewhat at length.

THIRDLY, I will vindicate this doctrine from certain OBJECTIONS.

FOURTHLY, I will endeavour to point out THE BEAUTY OF THIS DOCTRINE in its connexion with the salvation which the Gospel makes known to us.

§ 1. *The doctrine of the Trinity in Unity stated, and the nature of the proof the Bible gives pointed out.*

6. The doctrine as we gather it from the Bible, is this :

That there is One and Only One Living and True God : but that in that godhead there are Three Persons of equal power, majesty, and eternity, called Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

The doctrine
stated.

7. The Bible, you know, consists of various books from Genesis to the Apocalypse written at various times and by various writers. The period of time over which the historical portions range is more than forty centuries. But notwithstanding this, one main topic runs through the whole, making the volume one revelation from heaven on the great subject of man's salvation. In directing your attention to the Bible in connexion with my present subject, there are two things which we may anticipate and which give a clue to the kind of proof we may expect of the Doctrine of the Trinity from the Bible.

1. We are not to expect to find *all* the attributes of Deity, *all* the wonders regarding His nature and His acts unfolded to us. As He is infinite, we may suppose these to be innumerable. Only such are made known to us as immediately concern us and our welfare.

These we ought diligently to attend to. "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which ARE REVEALED belong unto us and to our children for ever." (Deut. 29. 29.) While, then, there is much that is made intelligible to us under the

divine teaching which was before unknown, the truths explained will come in contact with those which are simply declared and not explained. The fact, therefore, of there being much still mysterious, even although this revelation has been made to us, is no argument against the truth of what we do comprehend, but rather the reverse.

(2.) The second observation is this. What is told us is revealed *gradually*, as the truths are required. This is a remarkable feature of the Bible. Intimation was given of the coming of a Saviour at the very entrance of sin into the world; but He did not come for 4,000 years. This was according to the Divine Will. In the meantime the light of prophecy and the meaning of divine ordinances, introductory to the Saviour's coming, grew brighter and brighter. In accordance with this, the revelation of the Nature of the Divine Being was gradual. That He is One and Only One Living and True God we learn from the very commencement, and it runs through the whole course of revelation in the old and new testaments. It is towards the close of the Bible, when the Saviour at last came, that the Trinity of Persons in the Deity was most clearly unfolded.

The knowledge of this was not sooner essential for the comprehension of the ways of God with men. The Gospel was not yet established. The people of God approached Him by appointed sacrifices which foreshadowed the coming Redeemer, but gave no information regarding His character. There are, no doubt, strong indications in the old testament, as I shall presently show, in which we can now, assisted by the light which the Gospel gives us, recognize the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity; and these serve as seeds of evidence, that there has been no actual change made under the Gospel regarding the nature of the Deity, but only further light that we may comprehend more of Him and of His ways. These intimations were to be expected. For this being the actual nature of God, that He is One and yet three Persons in that Unity, it was to be anticipated, that though it was in His Unity that He was mainly set forth, yet some gleams of light regarding the Trinity should also shine out, during the numberless times that He revealed Himself and spoke to prophets and patriarchs of old. In this gradual unfolding of truths, as they become necessary for us, we observe the divine wisdom in the mode in which revelation is made to us.

8. These truths, my friends, are too precious to Christians and too sacred to be spoken of lightly. Among the ancients of Greece and Rome, and among Hindoos also, it has been the custom to keep back what have been regarded the inner mysteries of religion and to communicate them only to the initiated. And were you come into this sacred temple to cavil and to sneer at what is said, I should be wrong in unfolding these truths before you. But I entirely believe that you appreciate our motive in inviting you here,

which is to give you the opportunity of knowing what Christians really think and believe on these grave matters, and on what grounds they believe. And therefore I now cheerfully lay these things before your enquiring minds, praying that God Almighty of His goodness will open your understandings and hearts, that as the truths I have to unfold form the ground of my own faith and happiness, so you may in time receive them also and be influenced by them in your life for your present peace and everlasting joy.

Having thus stated the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity and indicated the kind of proof you are to expect, I now proceed, as I promised, to the proof itself; and I will first show that the Bible teaches us the Unity of God, and then the Trinity of Persons.

§ 2. *Proof of the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity from the Bible.*

9. First, the Unity of God is declared throughout the whole Bible; viz. in the Pentateuch, the Histories, the Psalms, the Prophets, the Gospels, and the Epistles. I will give a quotation from each. In the Pentateuch, "Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God is one LORD"* (Deut. 6. 4.) In the Histories,

The Unity
of God.

"Thou art great, O LORD God; for there is none like Thee, neither is there any God beside Thee" (2 Sam. 7. 22.) In the Psalms, "Thou whose name alone is JEHOVAH art the most high over all the earth" (Psalms 3. 18.) In the Prophets, "Thus saith the LORD...I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God" (Is. 44. 6.) In the Gospels, Christ said "There is none good but one, that is God" (Matt. 19. 5.) Also, on another occasion, He quoted from the Pentateuch the words I have already used, and said "The first of all the commandments is this...The Lord our God is one Lord" (Mark. 12. 29.) In the Epistles, St. Paul says "There is none other God but one" (1. Cor. 8. 4.) And St. James says, "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well" (Jas. 2. 19.) The testimony of the Holy Bible in all its parts, under the varied circumstances in which they were written, and at wide intervals of time, is invariably the same on this point.

10. To this One Living and True God are ascribed many attributes and titles. He is the true God, the great God, the mighty God, the self-existent, the only wise, full of mercy and goodness, God and none else, God blessed for ever, the Lord of hosts,

Attributes
ascribed to God.

* Wherever in the English Bible the word Lord is printed in capital letters thus, LORD, the word in the Hebrew is Jehovah. Wherever in small letters thus, Lord, as appertaining to the Supreme Being, the word in the Hebrew is Adonai. Jehovah is never used, even figuratively, for any but the Supreme Being, as it implies His self-existence.

the King of kings and Lord of lords, the First and the Last. To Him belong omniscience, omnipresence, omnipotence, eternity, and immutability. The special works ascribed to Him as indicative of His divine power are creation, the upholding of all things, the changing the heart, the raising the dead, and the judgment of the world. To this One Being the Bible teaches us to pay divine worship, and to Him alone.

11. Texts innumerable may be found which speak of these attributes. The following are a few. You will observe how throughout the singular number is emphatically used and not the regal "We."

"And God said, I AM THAT I AM" (Ex. 3. 14.) "Thus saith the LORD...I am the LORD that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself." (Is. 44. 24.) "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God" (Ps. 90. 2.) The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." (Deut. 33. 27.) The LORD is the true God, He is the living God, and an everlasting King" (Jer. 10. 10.) "Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the LORD" (Jer. 23. 24.) "Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee" (2 Chron. 6. 18.) "I am the LORD, I change not" (Mal. 3. 6.) "Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy, I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones" (Is. 57. 15). "Then saith Jesus... Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve" (Matt. 4. 10.) "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" (Acts. 26. 8). "He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies" (Rom. 8. 11.) "The LORD...cometh to judge the earth. He shall judge the world with righteousness and the people with His truth" (Ps. 96. 13). "He hath appointed a day wherein He will judge the world in righteousness" (Acts. 17. 31.) "Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen." (1 Tim. 1. 17.) "The blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of Lords, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen." (1 Tim. 6. 15. 16).

All this—and very much more might be added to the same effect—must convince any enquirer, that the Holy Bible calls upon us to believe, that there is One Living and True God and none other, of eternal power, majesty, and glory.

12. But next, notwithstanding this plain and important fact, it is equally clear to the diligent student of the sacred volume,

A Trinity
of
Divine Persons.

that there are, in many parts of it and especially in the new testament, Three Persons spoken of as God, and who have the works and attributes belonging only to God assigned to them. These Three Persons are brought

together and associated in close union in the solemn form which the Founder of Christianity left to be used on the admission of disciples into the Christian Church. All who come are baptized "in the name"—observe, the name, not the names, but the one name—"of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Here the Three Persons are distinctly announced by Christ Himself, who had already declared the Unity of God in those words "there is none good but One, that is God"; and also, "the first of all the commandments is this...The Lord our God is one Lord."

The Second of these Persons, as the Bible teaches us, took our nature upon Him, uniting the manhood with the godhead, to become the Saviour of this fallen sinful world to all them that obey Him, and then returned to His original glory. The Third Person, the Holy Spirit, comes into the world to sanctify men's hearts and to glorify Christ in His work of salvation; that glory, honour, praise, power, and majesty may be ascribed through eternity to God Almighty—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—for the love, wisdom, and mercy displayed in man's salvation.

I have now to show you that these Three Persons are all spoken of in the Holy Bible as God, equal in majesty, power, and eternity.

13. The First Person, the Father, is so readily identified with the Deity, that none feel any difficulty in attributing all the divine attributes to Him. I would, however, here make an observation by way of distinction and clearness. The Deity, God Almighty, Father Son and Holy Ghost, is often spoken

The Father
is God.

of in the Bible as our Father, without any special reference to the First Person alone of the Holy Trinity. The word "Father" is in fact used in two senses in the Bible in reference to the Deity. First, in a general sense appertaining to God Almighty as our Creator, Preserver, and Benefactor; without any special reference to any one of the Persons alone, but to all Three collectively as the One Living and True God. Thus God said "I am a Father to Israel" (Jer. 31. 9.) "Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us?" exclaims the prophet Malachi (2. 10). So in the prayer which Christ taught His disciples, by "Our Father, which art in heaven," He meant, no doubt, the Supreme Being, Father Son and Holy Spirit, from whom all our blessings come, and not the First Person alone; for in the words of the prayer the term Father stands in no obvious connexion with Christ and the Holy Spirit.

The other, the particular sense in which the word Father's used, is when the First Person alone is spoken of, in relation to the Second Person of the Trinity, who in respect of that relation is called the Son of God, the only begotten Son of God. Thus when St. Paul speaks of the "Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" he means the First Person of the Sacred Trinity. So when the Lord Jesus Christ thus speaks, "All things are delivered to me of my Father, and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him" (Math. 11. 27,) it is evidently God the Father the First Person of the Blessed Trinity who is here spoken of, and not the whole Three Persons in God Almighty.

There is no question, then, regarding the deity of the Father, the First Person of the Trinity. Thus indeed does Christ address Him "I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth" (Matt. 11. 25). And throughout the Epistles He is called "God the Father." "Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ," is a common benediction of the Apostles. In some places He is called God without the affix of Father, as the context will plainly show: thus "God so loved the world that He sent His only begotten Son" (John 3. 16;) here the Father is evidently meant.

14. The divinity of the Second Person of the Holy Trinity I have now to prove to you from the Bible. My proof I will divide in the following manner:—(1) The Prophets, in their predictions of the coming of the promised Saviour, describe Him as God. (2.) When Christ came, He claimed that character Himself, and also showed by His works that it was His just right. (3) He is represented by Evangelists and Apostles to be God. When I have shown you all this, the demonstration from the Bible will be most complete.

15. (1) The Prophets proclaimed that the Saviour who was to spring from Adam, and especially in the line of the patriarch

Deity of the Son
made known
by the Prophets.

Abraham and of king David, should also be God Himself. The title which the prophet Isaiah gives Him, when he announces His miraculous birth more than seven centuries before it became an historical fact, indicates

the godhead, as well as the manhood, of the Redeemer. "Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son and shall call His name IMMANUEL"—(7. 14.) a Hebrew word, which, as explained by St. Matthew in applying this prophecy to Jesus Christ, means "God with us" or dwelling with us (Matt. 1. 22, 23). Again, the same prophet foretells the Saviour's birth in another passage, the opening part of which is quoted by St. Matthew (4. 14, 16) in a way which shows that the whole applies to Christ. "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon His

shoulder; and He shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the MIGHTY GOD"—observe, the Mighty God—"the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace" (9. 6). This text gives an illustration of what I have said regarding the word Father. Here, of course, it has not that technical meaning, which it has when designating the First Person of the Godhead. It means that Christ, by working out a mighty salvation, would be the Father or Author of the world to come. St. Paul says of him, "He became the Author of eternal salvation" (Heb. 5. 9); and elsewhere the same Apostle calls Him "the Second Adam," or Head of the human race, "the Lord from heaven" (1 Cor. 15. 45, 47). He is thus, as the second Adam, the "everlasting father" of the whole Church, which derives its spiritual life and being from Him, as the whole race of men derive their existence from the first Adam. But to proceed with my quotations from the prophets. When the prophet Jeremiah predicts the Saviour's descent from the house of David, he, in a most emphatic manner, asserts His Godhead, applying to Him that title which is never, even in a figure, applied to any other than God Almighty. "Behold the days come saith the Lord that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch...and this is His name whereby He shall be called, JEHOVAH our Righteousness (Jer. 23. 5, 6). When the prophet Micah predicts that Bethlehem was to be the place of Christ's birth, he also gives a direct testimony to His existence from eternity. "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been of old, FROM EVERLASTING" (Micah 5. 2). When the prophet Zechariah predicts the dread sufferings which the Redeemer was, according to His own and His Father's will, to undergo to atone for the sins of the world when He took our manhood upon Him, he distinctly asserts His equality with the Father. "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd and against the man that is MY FELLOW, saith the LORD of hosts. Smite the shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered" (Zech. 13. 7.)—a passage quoted by St. Matthew (28. 31,) as verified in Christ's sufferings, and His disciples' conduct. When the last of the prophets, Malachi, announced the advent of Christ and also of His forerunner John the Baptist, he pointedly calls Him JEHOVAH. "Behold I will send my messenger [that is, John the Baptist] and he shall prepare the way before me; and the LORD [or Jehovah] whom ye seek shall suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in. Behold He shall come, saith the LORD of hosts" (Mal. 3. 1).

Can anything be more convincing than all this, that the expected Redeemer, while He was to be Man, was according to the prophets to be God also, God-with-us, the Mighty God, Jehovah, His goings

forth being from everlasting, and He being the fellow or equal with the Father?

16. (2) This character, which had been thus announced hundreds of years before Christ came, He Himself claimed as His divine right, and proved His claim to be just by His works. He asked His disciples, whom men said that He was, and then added, "But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus" owned this title, for He "answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 16. 15-17.) When Jesus stood before the Jewish high priest at His mock trial, "the high priest said unto Him, I adjure you by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus said unto him, Thou hast said," which in the Greek idiom means, what thou hast said is true: and He proceeds, "Hereafter shall ye see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high priest rent his clothes saying, He hath spoken blasphemy (Matt. 26. 63-65)—showing by the exclamation, that he rightly understood Christ's meaning when He asserted His divine character. When His disciple Nathaniel, the man without guile, struck by the omniscience of Jesus, answered and said unto Him, "Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God, Thou art the King of Israel," Jesus did not reject this testimony, but confirmed it by replying, "Because I said I saw thee under the fig tree believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these" (John 1. 49, 50). As the time of the Redeemer's voluntary humiliation was drawing to a close, and He was about to offer that great atonement upon the cross for the sins of the world, He thus refers to His own proper majesty and glory in His prayer to His Father; "O Father, glorify Thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was" (John 17. 5.) These words exactly coincide with His previous declaration to His disciples, "I and my Father are one" (John 10. 30,) although in reference to His voluntary humiliation He also said "My Father is greater than I" (John 11. 28.) That Jesus claimed to be equal with His Father, the unbelieving Jews quite understood; so that there can be no doubt about the meaning of His words; for when Jesus said "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work, therefore the Jews sought the more to kill Him, because he said that God was His Father, so making Himself equal with God" (John 5. 17, 18.) So that Christ claimed to be regarded as God, God Almighty.

17. And the justice of this claim was testified to by His works and His conduct. Those who beheld them marvelled, and paid to

Him that worship, and ascribed to Him those titles, which He would have rejected, had they not been His rightful due. When He walked upon the sea and the waters were calmed, "then they that were in the ship came and worshipped Him saying, Of a truth Thou art the Son of God" (Matt. 14. 33.) And when Mary delivered her creed "Yea, Lord, I believe that Thou art the Christ, the Son of God, that should come into the world" (John 11. 27), she bore testimony to the current belief which the predictions of the prophets had created, and Jesus rejects not the testimony. So when the incredulous Thomas would not at first believe in the resurrection of Christ, and Christ made that pathetic appeal to him, when He suddenly appeared for the second time after His resurrection in the midst of His disciples, "Reach hither thy finger and behold my hands, and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into my side, and be not faithless but believing; and Thomas answered and said, My Lord and my God," Jesus in His reply gave no intimation that this homage and these titles were not His due, but accepted them as such. The claim to be the Son of God which Jesus asserted before the high priest, and with which they taunted Him in His sufferings, "If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross," even the Roman centurion on guard and some who were with him acknowledged, so amazed were they with His conduct on the cross and with the things which happened when He gave up the ghost, and "they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God" (Matt. 27. 54.) All His miracles, as they were wrought in His own name and by His own power, and not like those of the apostles which were wrought in the name of Jesus and by His and not their own power, testify to His divine character: and, especially, so does that stupendous event when He raised Himself from the dead according to His own words, "I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me; but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again" (John 10. 17, 18). Indeed the Apostle places the resurrection of Christ, as a conclusive proof of His divinity, at the fore-front of his epistle to the Romans. His Gospel was, he said, "concerning Jesus Christ, who was made of the seed of David after the flesh, but declared to be the Son of God with power...by the resurrection from the dead" (Rom. 1. 3, 4).

This second stage in my proof, then, is established. Not only did the Prophets long before predict, that the Saviour who was to come, while He was to rise up as one of the human family, would be also a Divine Person, with all the attributes of God; but Jesus Christ Himself claimed this character, and also manifested it in His acts and conduct.

18. (3) I have now, thirdly, to show that He was represented to

be God most High by the Evangelists and Apostles in their writings and preaching, when their minds had been illuminated by light from above after Christ's ascension. St. John, in

Christ is
represented to be
the Son of God
by Evangelists
and Apostles.

the most unequivocal manner, declares this truth in the opening of his gospel, asserting in those few sublime and comprehensive words the eternal pre-existence of Christ, His deity, and His separate personality, attributing the creation of all things to Him—an unanswerable

testimony to His godhead; he then shows that He became man and also manifested forth His glory, to those who could see it, as of the only begotten of the Father. The particular title St. John gives Him here is the Word of God. "In the beginning was the Word:" a singularly pithy and convincing form of expression to denote the eternal pre-existence of Christ. It means, that in the beginning, when created things began to exist, Christ already existed. Had Christ been a *created* being, like the angels, he would have had a beginning, and it could not have been said that He was already in existence, in the beginning. This brief inspired expression declares, therefore, the eternal pre-existence of Christ. "And the Word was with God." There His existence as a Person, distinct from the Father and the Holy Spirit, is asserted. "And the Word was God." There is His proper deity. "The same was in the beginning with God." Here His distinct personality is again asserted. "All things were made by Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was made." Here the divine attribute of creation, which belongs to God only, is ascribed to Him—as by St. Paul elsewhere, "God...hath spoken to us by His Son...by whom also He made the worlds" (Heb. 1. 1, 2). He is then set forth in the opening of St. John's Gospel as the life and the light of men; and the whole passage closes with these words, "And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father" (John 1. 1, 11), which of itself conclusively shows, were there no subsequent context to assert it, that the whole passage refers to the Son of God, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, who became man for us. It were needless to add more to this unanswerable testimony of the inspired Apostle to the fact that Christ is God. The whole of the Apostolic writings are in fact brilliant with the light of this truth, which shines out on almost every page. Thus St. Paul in writing of the patriarchs says "Of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is God over all blessed for evermore." (Rom. 9. 5). He writes to Timothy, "Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness, God was manifest in the flesh" (1 Tim. 3. 16), that is in the person of Jesus Christ. When he animates Titus and all Christians to look for the second appearing of the

Lord Jesus Christ, he uses this language; "Looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of our Great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ" (Titus 2. 13). To the Hebrews he writes, quoting the Psalms, "To the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever" (Heb. 1. 8).

19. Let none of you venture, then, to deny that the Holy Bible sets forth the divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ in the most clear and unequivocal manner. It is possible that a text may sometimes be brought forward which is not altogether conclusive on this point; but there is not one which contradicts it; and there is, indeed, a constellation, nay, a series of constellations of passages which affirm it to be a divine fact. Prophets for ages foretold that the Saviour should be a Man and yet God Himself. When Christ came, He claimed to be the Son of God. Evangelists and Apostles always represented Him to be God.

20. Having carried you on through the argument that the Second Person is God, I must do the same regarding the Holy Ghost, the Third Person in the Divine Essence. Upon this I need not dwell so much at length; for the divinity and personality of the Second Person being admitted, those

The Holy Ghost
is God.

of the Third will be more readily admitted also. That the Holy Spirit is a distinct Person, besides the Father and the Son, is evident from the manner in which Christ speaks of Him in His last discourse with His disciples before He finally suffered upon the cross. That discourse you will find in the 14th, 15th, and 16th chapters of St. John's Gospel. "I will pray the Father," Christ says to His disciples, "and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of Truth," (John 14. 16, 17). Again, "These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you" (v. 25, 26). Again, "When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of me" (15. 26). Once more, "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you...when He...is come, He will guide you into all truth; for He shall not speak of Himself, but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak, and He shall show you things to come. He shall glorify me" (16. 7, 13, 14). No words are necessary after these quotations from Christ's own lips to show, that the Spirit of God is represented to be a real Person distinct from the Father and the Son; for He is sent by the Father and by the Son; He comes forth, and proceeds; He abides, He teaches, He testifies, He guides—all of

which are the acts of a real being and not of a mere attribute of the Deity. *How* the invisible Spirit of God acts upon us, we cannot tell. But no more can you tell how my *human* spirit is acting upon yours at this moment, or yours upon ~~me~~ another at other times. By our philosophy we can trace the mechanism of the voice the air and the ear, which connects the speaker with the hearer; but the action of our human spirits or minds at the two ends of this chain, is an utter mystery to us, though so perpetually in use. The question, therefore, how does the Spirit of God act upon us? need place no obstacle in the way of our believing in His existence as a Person, though His mode of action be a mystery.

21. Next, that this Holy Spirit of God is a Divine, as well as a real, Person is also manifest from the Bible. The manner in which He is associated with the Father and the Son in the formula of baptism—"in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost"—is sufficient to show this. Also the place of equal honour He holds in the apostolical benediction, "the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all" (2 Cor. 13. 14), shows the same. From these it is clear He must be a divine, and not a created, Person; otherwise He would not be thus associated with the Father and the Son on equal terms. But I will add one or two more proofs from the Holy Bible. When Christ was upon earth there was a sin against the Holy Ghost, which, He said, admitted of no remission. "Whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world neither in the world to come." (Matt. 22. 32). It is supposed that this referred to open blasphemy against the clear manifestation of the power of the Holy Ghost in miracles. But whatever it was, it is clear that there was a sin against the Holy Ghost distinct from any sin against God the Son, which had an aggravation greater than other sins; and therefore the Holy Ghost must be both a Person and a Divine Person, that is God. Again; St. Peter said to Ananias when he had lied to the apostles regarding his possessions, "Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie against the HOLY GHOST? Thou hast not lied unto men [that is to the apostles merely], but unto GOD" (Acts. 5. 3, 4). So that the Holy Ghost must be God. Once more; St. Paul asks the Corinthian Christians, "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?" (1 Cor. 6. 11): and in another place, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God?" (1 Cor. 3, 16). Hence the Holy Ghost is God. He is a Divine Person as well as a real Person.

22. Thus, then, the Bible teaches us that all Three, Father Son

and Holy Ghost, are God. Equally exalted language is used with reference to all Three. In the words of one of the ancient creeds of the church, in which the teachings of the Bible on this great doctrine are summed up, "Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Ghost. The Father uncreate, the Son uncreate, and the Holy Ghost uncreate. The Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible, and the Holy Ghost incomprehensible. The Father eternal, the Son eternal, and the Holy Ghost eternal.... So likewise the Father is almighty, the Son almighty, and the Holy Ghost almighty. So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God. So likewise the Father is Lord, the Son Lord, and the Holy Ghost Lord." And yet, as the creed states, these are not three eternals, incomprehensibles, almighties, Gods, or Lords; but only One: and it then assigns the reason for this statement, viz. that though the Gospel teaches the Trinity, the whole Bible teaches the Unity. "For like as we are compelled by the Christian Verity [that is, the Gospel] to acknowledge every Person by Himself to be God and Lord; so are we forbidden by the Catholic Religion [that is, the Universal Religion, running through the whole Bible, Old and New Testaments] to say, There be three Gods or three Lords."

23. Some, thoroughly persuaded that the Bible teaches that each Person is God, and yet attempting to reconcile what seemed to them so perplexing, as that view apparently led to the result that there are three Gods, endeavoured to solve the difficulty by hold-

Sabellianism. *

ing, that these Three Persons were in fact the One God manifesting Himself under different characters, in different circumstances; and not three distinct personal agents, though of one essence. The passages I have quoted from Christ's last discourse with His apostles, before He died, proves incontestably, that the actions of the Three Persons are appropriate to themselves severally, and that they act simultaneously. When Christ was baptized by John the Baptist, the Spirit descended upon Him, and the voice of the Father was heard from heaven, "This is my beloved Son." It is impossible that in this transaction it can be the One God assuming three successive representations, throwing off the last before the next is assumed. No device of the kind can set aside the simple deduction from the Bible, that there is "One Person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost:" and that while they are all alike in possessing the attributes of deity, there

* The followers of Sabellius were condemned by the council of Antioch, A. D. 264.

are not three eternal, but one eternal ; not three incomprehensibles, uncreated, almighties, Gods, or Lords ; but One only.

24. When this doctrine of the Trinity in Unity was set forth in the early Christian Church and great disputings of sceptical and metaphysical minds arose, this was one of the difficulties urged against it ; ‘ If you assert that there are Three Persons in the Godhead, and that these are co-equal, co-eternal, all of them incomprehensible, almighty, God, and Lord—all alike in their attributes ; and you say they are called Father Son and Holy Ghost ; how are we to distinguish which is Father, which is Son, and which Holy Ghost ? Why not call all three Father, or all three Son, or all three Holy Ghost ? You prove’ in fact this quibbler would say, ‘ that there are three Fathers or three Sons or three Holy Ghosts’—so quick were men then, as now, to detect any apparent flaw in this glorious doctrine ! The answer is this. Though the Persons are of equal power, majesty, and eternity in the Godhead ; yet there is a relationship or order amongst them asserted in the Bible. Thus the Son is called the “ begotten ” of the Father. The very terms Father and Son seem to be selected, in accommodation to our limited comprehensions, to convey to us, as far as human language can, the idea of mutual relationship, the first not being to the second what the second is to the first. So of the Holy Ghost. He is said to “ proceed ” from the Father. He was sent by the Father, and also by the Son. He is called the Spirit of the Father, and the Spirit of the Son, the Spirit of Christ. This being sent, and his proceeding (or procession), is the term used in the Bible to denote the relation of the Holy Ghost to the Father and the Son ; as “ begotten ” is the term used to denote the relation of the Son to the Father. And without understanding what these terms precisely mean we may safely use them, because they are used in the Bible, and they serve to mark a distinction in the Persons. These ideas are thus summed up in the creed I have already quoted. “ The Father is made of none ; neither created, nor begotten. The Son is of the Father alone, not made, nor created, but begotten. The Holy Ghost is of the Father and of the Son ; neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding. So there is one Father, not three Fathers ; one Son, not three Sons ; one Holy Ghost, not three Holy Ghosts. And in this Trinity none is afore or after other ; none is greater or less than another ; but the whole Three Persons are co-eternal together and co-equal...So that in all things, as is aforesaid, the Unity in Trinity and the Trinity in Unity ought to be worshipped.”

25. I have already dwelt so long upon the proof of this doctrine, that I hardly like to detain you upon this part any longer. I must,

• This doctrine
confirmed
by the
Old Testament.

however, occupy your attention for a short time on a point I have already hinted at: viz. the confirmation which the Old Testament gives to these deductions which flow so copiously from the New. And the nature of the evi-

dence is of that kind which makes it very strong, almost stronger than if it were more distinctly given, being what is styled "undesigned," and can therefore spring only from the doctrine being true. The full revelation of the Trinity in the Godhead not being needed till the Gospel was preached, it was not given. But as the actual nature of the Deity is a Trinity in Unity, it is to be expected that if we go back to the Old Testament with this light as our guide, some passages there which speak of the Deity will, when thus illuminated, give forth a meaning not before perceived, in full illustration of the completely developed doctrine. I have already shown that the promised Redeemer, the Second Person, was described in the prophets as God. The Holy Spirit also is referred to, under the same character. Thus in the very opening verses of the Bible, in the account of the creation, the Spirit is distinctly referred to. "In the beginning God"—that is the Deity whom we have seen to be Father Son and Holy Spirit—"created the heaven and the earth:" and in the next verse it says, "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." The Spirit is again referred to in the book of Job as having taken part in creation. "By His Spirit He hath garnished the heavens" (26. 13.). Also in the Psalms, "Thou sendest forth Thy Spirit and they are created" (104. 30). The striving of the Holy Spirit with the hearts of men is mentioned before the flood. Many indeed are the allusions in the Old Testament to His personality and power. That there is a plurality of persons of the Godhead, is evident from the words of the Almighty. After all other things had been made, as God approaches the creation of His last creature, who was to have dominion over the rest, He uses the language of consultation. "Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness," language which is perfectly intelligible to one who believes in the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity. That the use of the plural is not a mere figure to indicate sovereign dignity, but arises from a true plural, is seen in this. When Adam and Eve had eaten of the forbidden fruit and had their eyes open to know good and evil, the Almighty said "Behold the man is become as ONE of US"—not as us, but as ONE of us—"to know good and evil" (Gen. 3. 22.)—in which there is a true plurality in the Godhead indicated. But there are two passages in the Old Testament where we can distinctly realize the fact of the Trinity, now made known to us in the New. Although they are not sufficient of themselves to prove the doctrine, they furnish a very strong confirmation of it. The first is this. "The LORD spake

unto Moses saying, Speak unto Aaron and say unto his sons, saying, On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel, saying unto them, The LORD bless thee, and keep thee; The LORD make His face shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee; The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee and give thee peace" (Numbers 6. 22-26.) This triple blessing reminds us of the triple Name in the form of baptism and in the benediction in the Gospel. The other passage in the Old Testament where we recognize a Trinity of Persons, is in the vision of heaven which Isaiah beheld when he heard the Seraphim crying one to another "Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD of hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory (Is. 6. 3). In this vision, some of the louder notes, as it were, of the ceaseless song of praise and adoration seem to reach our ears and tell us, that in heaven angels and archangels and all the company above worship One God Almighty in Three Persons—Holy Father, Holy Son, and Holy Ghost. That this is not only a natural deduction from the passage itself, when the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity has been learnt from the New Testament, but is also most certainly true, appears from the circumstance, that the vision is commented on in the New Testament in two places, which show that both the Second and Third Persons are here referred to. When the Jews would not believe on Christ and were hardened against him, the evangelist writes "But though He had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on Him;" and he quotes the words of prophecy delivered to Isaiah in this vision to show, that this hardness had been predicted, and then adds, "These things said Esaias (that is, Isaiah) when he saw His glory (that is, CHRIST's glory) and spake of Him" (that is, of Christ) (John. 12. 4.). Again when the Jews opposed the preaching of St. Paul at Rome, he says "Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers" (Acts. 29. 25), and then quotes the prophecy of their hardness uttered in this vision; so that the HOLY GHOST spake to the prophet in this vision. Hence the Second and Third Persons with the Father were the Holy Holy Holy Lord God of hosts, of whom the Seraphim sang.

Some have conceived that the faint indications of a Trinity in the Godhead, which are to be found in some of the religions of the world, derive their origin from the times of the patriarchs before Noah and after him till the Jews became a nation. I do not think that we have sufficient evidence from the Bible, that at that early period the patriarchs knew that there were precisely *three* persons in the Unity of the Godhead; the first evidence of this of any kind, is in the form of blessing by which Aaron was to bless the people, as I have already shown. The patriarchs *may* have been taught that there were *three* Persons in the Godhead; but I can adduce no passage from the Bible to prove this. That there was a *plurality* of some kind in

the Deity they must have known. The most remarkable of the traditions regarding a trinity is the Hindoo Triad, which is mentioned in the Vedas, which appear to date from some time between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries before Christ, a period of two centuries immediately preceding the time of Samuel the Prophet.

The awe with which the monosyllable which represented the *Trimurti* is said to be pronounced by Hindoos in secret, the name of three letters *AUM*, as denoting the Deity, shows the reverence with which they regard that name. It is quite possible that this notion of a trinity, though so much corrupted, *may* have been derived from the Jews during that period, if the threefold blessing by Aaron be sufficient evidence, that the Jews knew the doctrine themselves. All this, however, is a matter of speculation, and therefore does not come properly within the scope of my lecture, in which I proposed to demonstrate the truth of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity in Unity from the Bible, and to show its connexion with Christianity.

§ 3. *Vindication of the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity from various objections.*

26. I now come to consider some objections which are urged against this great doctrine of the Trinity in Unity. Some of them are too frivolous to engage any serious mind: and none are of any real weight, though I feel it right to notice them.

27. The objection which troubles beginners is this: I cannot comprehend this doctrine. But are there not many things in every day life which you cannot comprehend; but

The doctrine
is incom-
prehensible.

you cannot hesitate to believe and act upon them? You need not go further than the structure of your own frame to learn this.

Your eyes and ears you are perpetually using for seeing and hearing; and anatomists can show us the wonderful mechanism which connects us by seeing and hearing with external objects and with one another. But who can comprehend, as I have before asked, the means of connexion between this mechanism and our minds? Where does this mechanism end, and our minds begin? The thing is utterly incomprehensible to you; but this in no way prevents your believing in its existence. So the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity may be inexplicable to you; but its use, as I shall have to show, is of the last importance.

28. Some object, that there is an apparent contradiction in the assertion that God is One and yet Three. How can one be three and three one? is asked with a triumphant smile by the novice whereas a little thought would show, that this idea also is not opposed to what you every day feel in yourself, and

Inconsistency
of God being
One and Three.

acknowledge in others. Is not each one of you an independent unit in creation, a single being? And yet you have in you two parts, body and mind, as distinct as possible. Think of this marvellous body, the seat of the senses, by whose wonderful mechanism the whole visible creation around, and even very distant objects, become present to us through the organs of vision; the thoughts and moving appeals of others become ours and sink into our hearts through the organs of hearing; our own longings are communicated to others through the organs of speech; and new thoughts are awakened and new pleasures enjoyed through those of touching and smelling. What a being is this body with its animal life! But let these powers of sensation be arrested in their action; there is another part, the immortal spirit, different, separate, and superior to them all, which can penetrate into regions which no sight can reach, whence no sounds can be heard, nor other sense play its part. It can roam at ease through the past, and can anticipate the future: is independent of time and space, and is limited only by that which limits every thing in man, viz. that he is a finite creature. Here, then, we have, most distinctly, an example of a living being, one in one sense, and two in another. And though the comparison between the union of body and mind in man, and of the Three Persons of the Sacred Trinity in One God, is by no means a parallel, and can in no degree assist us to comprehend in what manner the Three exist in the One, it is sufficient for this purpose, viz. to annihilate the objection, that there is in itself a contradiction in the assertion, that the Divine Being is One and yet Three in that One.

29. Others object, that a Trinity is contrary to our instinctive notions regarding the Deity; and that we can realize the idea of His Unity, but not of the Trinity. But, my friends, you are greatly mistaken if you think you can comprehend even the Unity of God. What notions you may think you possess on the subject are derived, doubtless, from your knowledge of Man, of individual men. Indeed, in condescension to our limited capacities, God Almighty addresses us as if He were a man.—The Bible speaks of His all-seeing eye, His out-stretched arm, His hand ready to save, His face lifted up upon us, His heart moved at our necessities. But God is a Spirit, without body, parts, or passions. Who can form any conception of such a Being, even in His Oneness?—not one of you. You are as utterly at a loss to form any idea of a Spirit of simple Unity, as of a Trinity in Unity or a Unity in Trinity. You may suppose you do, because you have perhaps long habituated your minds to the thought. But this is mere prejudice: and men of thought should be able to divest themselves of prejudices for which no reason exists, and which will not stand before the light of revela-

The Unity
of God
thought
intelligible.

tion. We might never have thought of a Trinity of Persons in particular without revelation, because there would be no cause within the range of our knowledge, why the number should be Three. But this revelation when made to us, though it is new to our minds, conveys nothing contradictory in itself, and should therefore be received thankfully and reverently, as Christians do receive it, as information communicated to us from heaven. Metaphysians indeed have shown that the idea of a Plurality in the Divine Essence is more free from difficulty than that of absolute and simple Unity. But it is not my purpose this evening to view the subject of my lecture in a metaphysical light, but only as the doctrine is revealed to us in the Bible.*

30. Another objection urged is the use of the terms, Father and Son, to represent the relationship of the First and Second Persons of the Godhead. But here again, this difficulty arises from the narrowness of the circle within which the objector's conceptions lie. Thoughts regarding these terms are allowed place in such minds, which Christians deem to be nothing short of blasphemy, when urged as arguments against God's revelation of Himself. To any sensible thoughtful man who is not ready to scoff—and with scoffers I have nothing to do, but to leave them to themselves—it must be evident, that the language is figurative, and that that part only of the figure is used (as is always the case in using emblems) which is suitable to the occasion. It is only wilful obstinacy and wayward opposition which will take any other view of this matter. What is the meaning, then, which these terms, Father and Son, used figuratively, are intended to convey? I answer, Identity of nature in the First and Second Persons; dependence of being, though not beginning of being; the closest resemblance consistent with distinction of Persons; the most intimate union in holiness and love. And therefore Christ is called the only begotten Son of God, God's own Son, His beloved Son. God is a Spirit; and therefore that part of the human emblem of father and son, which appertains specially to the flesh, can have no place in the use made of it to represent to us this heavenly truth. This would have been obvious to any but a cavilling gainsayer. The term father is used among ourselves in several ways as a figure, without any reference to the origin of his offspring. We talk of the father of history, the father of inventions. So of the term mother. We talk of a mother church, because it has under its guidance

Terms
Father and Son
objected to.

* See Mansel's Bampton Lectures, particularly the sixth. In the *Calcutta Christian Intelligencer* for September 1865 there is an excellent article, a translation of a tract for Mahomedans by the Rev. W. Smith, C. M. S. of Benares, in which the matter is put in a clear and succinct form.

other churches. Towns have sometimes been called the daughters of the leading city. We speak of a parent society, when other auxiliary societies depend upon it. And therefore to infer, that because the figure of Father and Son is used, all the allusions which a merely human fleshly meaning would convey are of necessity to be included, is contrary even to common usage, and should have been far from any mind, when the figure is applied to that Being who is without body, parts, or passions, but is the Eternal God, the Great Spirit, Father Son and Holy Ghost.

31. Another objection is, that this doctrine of the Trinity has been invented in order to support Christianity. This notion is al-

The doctrine
of the Trinity
invented
to support
Christianity.

together refuted by the testimony which the Old Testament bears to the Deity of the then expected Redeemer and also of the Holy Spirit, together with the confirmatory allusions to the Plurality of Persons and to the

Trinity of Persons in particular. Or others say, that though this doctrine of the Trinity in Unity can be clearly deduced from the Bible, yet that before man was created, and fell, and needed a Saviour, there was no Trinity, but that the One God developed Himself into Three Persons, to carry out His purposes regarding man. This is a fiction of their own invention, for which there is not the slightest ground in the Bible; and is the result of pure speculation, striving to comprehend what is incomprehensible, and in so doing suggesting solutions which are in themselves no more intelligible than those which they are invented to explain.

32. Let me assure you, my friends, that it is too late, in the history of Christianity, to invent new objections against the doctrine of the

All objections
are
exhausted.

Trinity in Unity: and the old ones have been answered perpetually. These objections have all sprung from the pride of man's fallen heart, the pride of intellect, unwilling to admit what it cannot grasp; and struggling,

but in vain, to comprehend things beyond its capacity; and, when not comprehending them, to explain them away, and to tone them down by human reasonings, so as better to suit their preconceived notions. Puny man, in fact, with his puny powers contends against the All-wise and Almighty, and comes not, as he should, as a child to learn of His heavenly Father. We repudiate an appeal to human reason for the comprehension, as much as for the discovery, of these transcendental truths, which can be made known to us solely from heaven. To reason we do appeal, and that without hesitation, for the establishment of the evidence that the Sacred Book, in which these things are told us, is a gift from God, who inspired His holy prophets and apostles to communicate to us divine truths of which we should otherwise be ignorant; but the doctrines revealed are not

amenable to our reason. When men of such powers of mind as Sir Isaac Newton, Barrow, and Lord Bacon, have unhesitatingly given in their adhesion to these truths, and no difficulties troubled them, is it to be conceived that objections which inferior minds advance can have any weight?

33. During the first few centuries after the planting of Christianity by Christ and His apostles, its doctrines became extensively known, and the new religion had among its converts men of learning, as well as the illiterate. Its truths thus came in contact with the schools of philosophy; especially in that renowned city which Alexander the Great had planted three centuries before on the Delta of the Nile, to divert, in a way which proved so successful, the commerce between the east and the west from the line of Tyre and Babylon, cities which he had reduced, to Egypt and the ports of the Mediterranean. Before the birth of Christ a great proportion of the learning of the civilized world had been transferred from the schools of Greece to those of this city, Alexandria. Nor was learning confined here to human philosophy. Under royal sanction the Old Testament Scriptures were here translated into Greek, an event which laid open these treasures to the philosophic mind. Moreover Christianity was very early planted in Alexandria; and in course of time many embraced the Christian faith. Some, however, were restrained by the pride of intellect from receiving these things in the simplicity becoming learners. While captivated by the heaven-born doctrines, they sought for subtle explanations. The ingenuity of the human mind was stretched to its utmost limit, under the most favourable circumstances of learning and intellectual power which can be conceived, to account for or to explain away what was so mysterious, and therefore humbling to man's powers. Human thought was thus commingled with

Age of
Heresies.

divine revelation; and from this sprang up, in the first centuries of Christianity, what has been termed, the Age of Heresies. It was the work of the Church to rebut these.

44. So obstinate was the opposition to this doctrine of the Trinity in Unity in a few minds, and especially to the true Deity of Christ from one particular quarter—I allude to the heresy of

Arianism.

Arius of Alexandria—that a severe contest arose. Compelled to give up one position after another under the force of proofs drawn from the Bible, the heretic thought to find refuge in this last statement; That however far back in eternity the Bible may trace the pre-existence of Christ, yet there was, he maintained, a time before *that*, when He was not. He could not but acknowledge that the attributes of Deity are fully accorded to Christ in the Bible, but He regarded Him as a Deity of an inferior order—a last refuge for this heresy, which threaten-

ed at one time, by its plausible reasoning, to dig deep its deadly fangs into the vitals of the church. But from this position it was as soon driven, as from any of its previous posts, under the light and authority of the Bible. For if there was a time when He was not, He must have been created. But St. John tells us in those sublime words I have already quoted, that "in the beginning" of created things the Word, that is Christ, was already in existence, and therefore He could not have been created. In fact He was God, and with God, and all things were made by Him and without Him was not anything made which was made. In those days of struggle between man's pride of intellect and God's declarations to Him in the Bible, it pleased God to raise up in the Christian church men of learning and profound knowledge of the Bible as champions of the truth. Among these is one name which especially stands out in history amidst others, as a bright ornament of the times—I mean Athanasius of Alexandria. He was the leading champion against this, which proved to be the most formidable of all the heresies which the subtlety of man devised. In a council of

Council of
Nicaea.

more than 300 Bishops, summoned with many other divines, lay as well as clerical, by Constantine the Great, the first Christian

Emperor of the Roman Empire, to discuss this matter, Athanasius defended the truth with a power of argument from the Bible which nothing could really resist. The heresy was condemned as contrary to the word of God by an overwhelming majority. The result is handed down to us in one of the Three Creeds used in the church from early times, viz. the Nicene Creed, so called from Nicaea, the city in Bithynia, where the council met. At the close of this age of heresies another, the third and longest of the church's creeds, was drawn up, more ample than any of the rest, and setting forth in its several clauses brief statements of the truth, as deduced from the Bible, in answer to all the heresies which had appeared on the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity and the Incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ. It was called the Athanasian Creed, though drawn up long after the time of Athanasius, because it stated doctrines which that great man so admirably defended from the Holy Bible. Thus the vain attempts of subtle men to fathom divine mysteries, proud in the consciousness of intellectual strength with which God had endowed them, have been the occasion of putting in our possession imperishable records of the unassailable truth of these doctrines. For, if all the subtlety which was then concentrated, upon this subject, and *that* for several centuries, has been unable to establish the validity of one charge against the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity, we may with confidence smile at the efforts of less formidable adversaries.

35. Men in these days who will still lean to their own under-

standings, and will not like wise men learn from the past, must go through the same hopeless process through which their predecessors in scepticism went. There is nothing new, but to their own uninstructed minds, in their objections. Every tyro who is given to disputation regards himself as a hero at first, till he finds his error. He who resists and struggles seems to himself the greater man, and is too often thought so by his companions who are no wiser than himself. They prove themselves, however, to be but novices, by leaning so much upon what has already been so often refuted. *He* is the really wise man, who can measure his powers, knows the limits of his capacity, perceives at once what is within and what is beyond the scope of his finite intelligence. *That* is the truly noble mind, which receives in simplicity the revelation from heaven, and adores Almighty God for making it.

§ 4. *The beauty of the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity in its connexion with the Christian Scheme of Salvation.*

36. But, my friends, this great doctrine regarding the nature of the Divine Being has not been revealed to us, as I have already intimated, as an abstract truth, merely to gratify us by informing our minds regarding the things of heaven. Had that been the object of revelation, there are doubtless a multitude of other truths which might as well have been made known to us for this purpose. This truth is come to us with tidings of the weightiest importance for our happiness, and fraught with the greatest blessings to all who will receive it. Therefore has it been revealed—therefore has it been selected for our benefit from the treasures of divine knowledge in heaven. The doctrine of the Trinity in

Use of the
doctrine
to us.

Unity lies at the foundation of Christianity. In its applicability to our wants, as a sinful fallen race, we see the beauty of this doctrine; and to setting this forth, shall I devote this

last portion of my address to you.

One of your own pundits has given a description of the Deity in the following striking words:—"Perfect truth; perfect happiness; without equal; immortal; absolute unity; whom neither speech can describe nor mind comprehend; all-pervading; all transcending; delighted with His own boundless intelligence; not limited by space or time; without feet, moving swiftly; without eyes, all surveying; without ears, all hearing; without an intelligent guide, understanding all; without cause, the first of all causes; all ruling; all powerful; the creator, preserver, transformer of all things. Such is the Great One."* But of what practical use is

* Pundit Radhacant's commentary on the Gayatri. See Moor's Hindoo Pantheon p. 411, A. D. 1810.

this to sinners such as we are? who should rather tremble to approach such a Being. Here is no love, pity, or mercy in this description: all is greatness and greatness alone, which must discourage, repel, and crush one who needs compassion, tenderness, and pardon.

37. God Almighty reveals Himself to us in the Bible as one who possesses these tender attributes, as well as the severer ones of

God reveals
Himself
as a God of Mercy.

power, truth, and justice. "I am that I am" was the mysterious name by which the Almighty told Moses to make Him known to the Israelites in Egypt, when they were in bondage and trouble—a name which implies His inscrutable and incommunicable attri-

butes, and might be expected rather to overawe than to comfort. But with this was coupled a message couched in these words of loving-kindness: "I have surely seen the affliction of my people and have heard their cry; for I know their sorrow and am come down to deliver them". Every word is a fresh token of love and mercy, and would turn the terrible, unapproachable, mysterious name into a tower of strength to the needy. Such too is the message of the Gospel to fallen man—to us sinners. The great and glorious God—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—foresaw the ruin which would come upon our fallen race created after His own image; but created with a free will to choose the good and reject the evil, or to do the reverse; with finite powers, liable to temptation and to sin. The permission of evil is one of those mysteries which we can never solve. Its existence being evident, the mysteriousness of its having been allowed perplexes our limited understanding, but can never disprove the fact. Indeed we live in the midst of mysteries—mysteries too, which revelation has not produced, but which are seen in the constitution of things, and through which revelation is designed to guide us safely. Not only this, the permission of evil, but the freedom of man's will, taken in connexion with the certain fulfilment of God's purposes, man's accountability before God, taken in connexion with the sovereignty of God's power and grace—to contradict and to reconcile these things are to us equally impossible. Cease, my friends, from thinking that you will ever get clear of mysteries. But grasp the truths which are made intelligible to you through the goodness of God. These you have in abundance in the Gospel of God's mercy and grace, which I now bring before you.

38 Here, in the Bible, God the Father is revealed as moved in love and pity towards us. He therefore sent His Son into the world to be our Saviour. That same love moved the Son to undertake that work of mercy. He came voluntarily and out of love to us, to do this His Father's will and redeem the world. The

The
Gospel-scheme.

Holy Ghost, called by Christ "the Promise of the Father," was sent by the Father and by the Son to illuminate the apostles, as He had done the prophets of old, for our benefit; and He is now striving with the hearts and consciences of men, to enlighten, convince, and convert them, to draw men to Christ that they may be saved through Him to the glory of God. "This is a summary of the Gospel-scheme, and is to be found in such texts as these, "God so loved the world that He sent His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John. 3. 16). And Christ says of His own coming, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me" (John. 6. 38). "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again" (John. 10. 17, 18). "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John. 6. 37). So that all who feel the burden of sin, and their need of strength, light, and salvation will be received and accepted by Christ. He "tasted death for every man" (Heb. 2. 9.); and to all that come to Him in repentance and faith will that death be efficacious to their eternal salvation. Ask, my friends, that the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, whose office it is to convince, convert, and comfort, and that by pointing to Christ, would so act upon you. Hear what Christ says further regarding those that are drawn to believe on Him; "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me is greater than all: and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one" (John 10. 29, 30).

39. Thus you see the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity is intimately mixed up with the Scheme of Salvation revealed in the Bible. The love of God the Father, and the power of God the Spirit over the heart, are both engaged in this mighty undertaking. But the working out of man's salvation fell mainly, so to speak, on God the Son. To Him, therefore, was "all power given in heaven and earth" (Matt. 28. 18). "All things are delivered to me of my Father" said Jesus (Luke. 10. 22). "The Father loveth the Son and hath given all things into His hand" (John. 3. 35). "God hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things." (Heb. 1, 1, 2). To Him the Father gave honour and glory when both at His baptism (Matt. 3. 17), and at His transfiguration (17. 5), "there came to Him such a voice from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased" (2 Pet. 1.

Christ
The Saviour
of the
World.

17). To glorify Him and His work as the Saviour of sinners is the Holy Spirit's peculiar office: "He shall glorify me," said Christ (John. 16. 14). The great controversy, in foresight of the fall of man and the violation of the divine law by his disobedience, lay between Justice and Mercy, two of the attributes of the Deity. Each laid in its claim for guilty man. Justice pleaded the law and the curse by which the souls of sinners are handed over to vengeance, and on the execution of this the honour of God rests. Mercy interposed and pleaded, that if the rigorous demands of Justice are heard, Mercy must become an obscure and unregarded attribute in the divine essence. The case is infinitely difficult. It would have baffled all the sagacity of angels and of men to devise a method of reconciling these attributes, to discover how Justice can be satisfied in the punishment of sin and yet Mercy be gratified in the pardon of sinners. Here, then, is the glory of the central mystery of the Gospel. God was manifest in the flesh in the person of Jesus Christ—perfect God and perfect man, uniting in Himself the natures of Him who forgives and of them who are forgiven, capable therefore of suffering (see Heb. 2. 14, 17, 18), and His sufferings and merits being of infinite value (7. 25, and 9. 14). Justice finds in His vicarious sacrifice on the cross the fullest satisfaction. Mercy has its unplest exercise in the opening of the kingdom of heaven to all believers.

40. The death of Christ upon the cross may be regarded in three lights. It was a Redemption; the paying of the ransom-price of our guilty race for our deliverance from the Evil One, whose slaves we all became, through yielding to his temptations to disobedience, in the person of our first parents—a slavery which we are all born under, and aggravate by our own evil deeds and failures of duty. The death of Christ was also a Propitiation, to avert the just anger of God from our race, which had thus incurred His dread displeasure. The death of Christ was, moreover, a Satisfaction to God for the law broken by us, a fulfilling of that righteousness even unto death which the law of God demands, and which we had failed to perform and never can perform. So that in whatever light sinful man's position is regarded—as a slave of sin and Satan, as at enmity with God on account of sin, as a transgressor of the holy law of God—here, in Christ's sacrifice upon the cross, is an answer. Those three aspects of the effects of sin are met simultaneously by the sacrifice. Those who come to God through Him are "justified freely by His grace, through the REDEMPTION that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a PROPITIATION through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are passed, through the for-

Meaning
of Christ's
Sacrifice.

bearance of God, to declare, I say, HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS, that He might be just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." (Rom. 3. 24—26).

41. This solution of the gigantic difficulty which stood in the way of man's salvation is spoken of in the Bible as having been the result of the divine counsels before the world was. And therefore Christ is called "the Lamb [or sin-offering] slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13. 8,) because it was pre-ordained in the purpose of the Triune God. St. Peter speaks of "the precious blood of Christ...who verily was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times" (1 Pet. 1. 19. 20). Christ Himself speaks of the "kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world" (Matt. 25. 34). And, in accordance with this, St. Peter declares to the Jews, that though Jesus had been "taken and by wicked hands crucified and slain," yet that it was by the "determinate counsel and fore-knowledge of God" (Acts 2. 23).

42. The Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, having thus condescended to assume our nature, is often spoken of in the Bible in terms which indicate the subordinate position which He then voluntarily took, as Mediator between us and God. Thus in the prophecy of Isaiah, the Father calls Him His servant, as in several other places so in this.—"Behold my Servant whom I uphold, mine Elect in whom my soul delighteth? I have

put my Spirit upon Him. He shall bring forth judgment to the gentiles...A bruised reed shall He not break, and the smoking flax shall He not quench" (42. 1. 3), pointing to the loving-kindness and tender-mercy of His character and conduct—a passage which is particularly quoted by St. Matthew as referring to Christ (12. 20.). In some instances He is still called the Son of God, although this inferior office of Mediator which He assumed is being spoken of. Thus the words to Mary, "That holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1. 35). And the same we see in that remarkable prophecy of Him in the second Psalm, which from beginning to end refers to His mission from the Father into the world, and the fact of its being the result, so to speak, of a deliberation in heaven and a decree of the Father in which the Son acquiesced. In this Psalm the folly of opposing this Redeemer is first exposed. And then in the 7th verse He speaks Himself, and gives the decree which resulted in His coming into the world and taking this subordinate position. "I will declare the decree, Jehovah hath said unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me and I shall give thee the nations for thine

inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession" (2. 7. 8). And the Psalm concludes with this invitation, "Kiss the Son [that is, with the kiss of allegiance] lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him" (v. 12.). As Christ was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world to be the Saviour, these words, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee," refer to the event of that decree being pronounced, and to its being carried out, during the period of His manifestation in the world, as the Mediator, in His new character of God-man, sent to be our King, Redeemer, and Saviour. They may apply, then, to His miraculous incarnation, the beginning of this new character, "That holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God;" also to His resurrection from the grave—to which indeed St. Paul does apply them, "God hath fulfilled the same [*viz.* the promise to the fathers of the coming of Christ] to us, in that He hath raised up Jesus again, as it is written in the second Psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee" (Acts 13. 33). To Christ's ascension also to the throne above, as High Priest, does St. Paul apply this same passage, saying, "Christ glorified not Himself to be made a High Priest, but He that said unto Him, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee" (Heb. 5. 5). In short the expression "this day" refers, not to any particular ordinary day, but to that period in the world's history when the Mediator was to come to visit us on earth. And this appellation "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee," which stands at the head of the decree, and by which the Father addresses the Son, refers to the manifestation of God the Father to us in the divine and human person of Jesus Christ, which began in His birth of the virgin Mary, and was witnessed in many ways during His life on earth, especially in His birth, His resurrection, and His returning to His Father in heaven to be a High Priest on the throne of God.

43. In reference to this voluntary mission of the Son from heaven, to be the representative of the Father, and to do His will, St. Paul tells the Hebrews, that God appointed the Son to be HEIR of all things; and that by Him He made the worlds, that He is the "Brightness of His glory and the Express Image of His person" (Heb. 1. 2 13). This passage is precisely parallel to another which he writes to the Colossians, and enables us to explain a peculiar title used in what he says to them. "In Christ," he tells them "we have redemption through his blood...who is the Imago of the invisible God, the First-born of every creature [or, of all creation]; for by Him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things were created by Him and

for Him; and He is before all things and by Him all things consist" (Col. 1. 14—17). This, while it declares the Redeemer's divinity, as creation is ascribed to Him, also refers to the subordinate position to which He was appointed, and which He voluntarily assumed in regard to created things; *viz.* as Heir or First-born of all creation. This term "First-born" is very much the same as what I have already quoted from the second Psalm, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee." These expressions all refer to the mediatorial office which the Second Person took upon Himself, to become the Saviour of all who would believe on Him. From certain allusions of St. Paul to the Ephesians it appears, that Christ's becoming Heir of all worlds seems also to have reference to an effect of His meritorious work on earth beyond the human race: but in what way we are not told, the divine purpose of His death being simply alleged in these words, "that in the dispensation of the fulness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth" (Eph. 1. 10).

44. In some passages the Human nature of Christ is, as it were, singled out and put remarkably forward, when His mediatorial work is spoken of. Thus St. Paul to Timothy, "There is One God and One Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus" (1. Tim. 2. 5). Again to the Athenians, "God hath appointed a day in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained" (Acts. 17. 31). And although, as we have seen, Christ claimed as His just right to be regarded as the Son of God, yet He appears generally to have preferred that other title, "Son of Man," which brings Him most nearly to us, for and with whom He came to suffer and to sympathise. And this He does on one occasion even when He is asserting His divinity, "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man which is in heaven" (John. 3. 13). The human nature of Christ is also distinctly indicated, in contradistinction to His divine, in several other passages. In prospect of the load of guilt He had undertaken to bear, even the sins of the whole world in all their variety, number, and magnitude, His most holy soul seemed to shrink from so dark and bitter a cup, and He "prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt" (Matt. 26. 39). So also are those true marks of His Manhood, when St. Luke tells us that He "increased in wisdom" as well as "in stature" (2. 52). And that remarkable testimony to his limited human knowledge, which He bears regarding Himself, witnesses, more than anything could do, to the reality of his manhood, with a human body and a human soul; "Of that day and of that hour" when Christ shall come again "knoweth no man," said Christ when

He was on earth, "no not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father" (Mark. 13. 22). Christ had not a human body with the Deity possessing it in the place of a human soul. In that case He would not have been a Man. But, as a Man, He had a body and a soul—a soul in which He suffered, when He was in so great "an agony" and was "exceeding sorrowful" (Matt. 26. 28. Luke 22. 44), troubled at the sins He came to bear—a soul, in which His griefs for us were so deep, and the powers of darkness, from which He came to deliver all who believe on Him, so terrific in harassing Him, that He seemed for a moment to be lost in despair, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? (Matt. 27. 46)—a soul, which He poured out in death as an offering to God, when He stood in our place, with these words, "It is finished," "Father, into Thine hands I commend My Spirit" (John. 19. 30. Luke 23. 46). The union of these two natures in Christ, though a fact clearly demonstrated from the Bible, and, though the virtue of this union for the purpose of our redemption is beyond all question, is yet, to our finite minds, a profound mystery.

45. There is one more example, which I will notice, in which the title Son is made use of in a place where His office of Mediator is alluded to. It is in that grand allusion which St. Paul make to the end, the termination of His mediatorship; when the general resurrection will be past, the quick and dead judged, and the heavenly state begun: the world's redemption having been made on the cross, those out of every nation under heaven who have believed in the name of the Son of God will be saved for ever. "Then cometh the end, when Christ shall have delivered up the kingdom to God even the Father ...and when all things shall have been subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself [that is, as having finished His mediatorial work] be subject unto Him that put all things under Him that God may be all in all," (1 Cor. 15. 24, 28). This mighty work of salvation, the purpose of the Triune God in eternity, carried out during the pause of time between the eternity past and the eternity which is to begin, will be the theme of everlasting wonder and adoration for ever and ever. Especially will the part which the Redeemer has taken fill heaven with praise. "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honour and glory and blessing. And every creature which was in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them heard I saying," says St. John in vision, "Blessing and honor and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever" (Rev. 5. 12—13). This is also set forth by St. Paul in

Termination
of the
Mediatorial
work.

language equally sublime, when he is urging upon the Philippians the example of Christ's infinite condescension: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2. 5—11).

46. But time would fail me were I further to enlarge on this glorious theme of the Gospel of Salvation through Jesus Christ.

I have endeavoured to set before you the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity, as Christians gather it from the Bible and as I unhesitatingly hold it myself, and its connexion with Christianity. How any thoughtful man can reject this doctrine when he has had a fair opportunity of learning it, and so deprive himself of the inestimable blessings which Christianity builds upon it, is to me utterly inexplicable; except from the point of view from which the Bible enables us to regard such infatuation, I mean viewing it from the Fall of Man—that fatal palsy with which Sin has smitten the human race, and which it is the work of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to cure. The dislike to that which is holy, which naturally springs up in our sin-stricken hearts, till changed by the Spirit of God, will of course explain the *indifference* with which the doctrine and its blessings are regarded by some. But of intellectual *disbelief* I can see no explanation. Yield yourselves, my friends, to this great truth, and follow it out in its consequences. Those lecturers, who will follow me in this course, will assist you in this. From them you will learn, that you must, upon your knees in secret, entreat the God of Heaven by earnest prayer, that He would give you faith in the Great Redeemer, that through Him you may find pardon and peace and everlasting deliverance from sin and its effects; that He would make your hearts new and holy by the power of His Holy Spirit, and make your lives a perpetual witness by good works to the reality of that power and the sincerity of your belief; so that when the end shall come, and we all rise from our graves, and stand before God to be judged, your lot may be among that "great multitude," which St. John saw in prophetic vision, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, standing before the throne in perfect happiness, singing the song of everlasting praise.

REDEMPTION.

A LECTURE TO EDUCATED NATIVES OF INDIA
DELIVERED IN SAINT PAUL'S CATHEDRAL, CALCUTTA
ON FRIDAY NOVEMBER 10, 1865.

BY

REV. J. VAUGHAN.

CALCUTTA:

MESSRS. R. C. LEPAGE & Co.

1865.

BISHOP'S COLLEGE PRESS.

MDCCCLXV.

REDEMPTION.



LAST week our attention was called to the profound and mysterious doctrine of *the Trinity*. To night the subject of *Redemption* is the topic for our consideration. *Then* we contemplated God as He is in his own glorious nature; *now* we consider Him in his relation to ourselves.

The scriptural notion of redemption presupposes and is grounded upon the fact of man's fall. It regards man not only as a sinful being, but as essentially corrupt and depraved. It views him as having fallen from his first estate, as a wreck and ruin. The redemption of the Bible is therefore a very comprehensive matter. It professes not only to bring pardon to the transgressor; but to restore his forfeited estate, to raise him to his primitive standing, and to re-construct his character. I know full well that many whom I am addressing, dissent from the Christian view of man's natural condition. You consider the doctrine of the fall to be a myth; you think man's nature is, as regards its grand characteristics, such as it was when it came first from the hands of its Creator. You view man as a finitely perfect creature, with certain appetites and passions and propensions, ruled over, guided, and held in check by a moral sense—a moral sense strong enough to prevent irregularity and delinquency, provided its voice be heard and obeyed.

In your opinion, man's condition is that of a balance accurately poised. If the winds of temptation, blowing over man's animal tastes and faculties, cause on that side an oscillation, straightway the "inward monitor" utters its solemn voice, arrests the movement, and restores the wonted equilibrium.

Such I believe is your approved theory. Yet, somehow or other, this idea is practically abandoned when you come to speak of the world *as it is*. The theory would certainly point to a very happy, even, virtuous state of things. But nobody professes that such a state of things obtains in the world. Everybody admits and cannot help admitting, that vice is far more prevalent than virtue; that the condition of mankind generally, is one of weakness, ignorance, and sin. Few persons will pretend that the exercise of virtue and

morality comes to us so naturally and instinctively as to dispense with carefulness, watchfulness, and even self-denying effort ; and doubtless few will dispute, that the path of vice may be trodden—*is trodden* by the vast majority of men with readiness and facility. It may be so that the moral sense protests against their license ; but why does not the moral sense prevail ? “ Because ” you say “ men will not listen to her hallowed pleadings.” Now this brings us to the very root of the matter. What is the *will* but the man ? If despite the clamour of conscience, and the stern declarations of the judgment, yea, and the penalties which often follow transgression, the *will* persists in opposition, and hurries the individual along the forbidden path ; then are we not driven to infer, either that man’s will has been depraved, or that the Almighty at his creation gave him a moral sense to tell him his duty, and an opposing will to prevent his doing it ?

However, the doctrine of man’s fall is not my subject, and though it is involved in it, yet it is quite possible to treat the topic of human redemption without previously establishing that point. You and I are agreed in one respect—that *man is actually a sinner*. We are agreed too as to the fact, that sin to an infinitely holy God, must be grievously offensive.

We both admit I trust likewise, the necessity for pardon and reconciliation with God. Thus we have much common ground to go upon. I rejoice that we can travel together thus far ; but I mourn that here we are compelled to part company. I would fain hope, and I do earnestly pray the God of all grace, that at the close of this lecture we may again meet in unison, and with one mind and heart pursue the *one way*—“ the true and living way ” by which alone we can return to a Father’s embrace, and repose on the bosom of eternal love.

A vital question now meets us.—By what means are pardon and reconciliation to be obtained ? This is the one anxious problem of all human kind. This query, like a ceaseless echo of man’s yearnings, may be heard over the wide expanse of a thousand generations. From race to race, from continent to continent, does the enquiry proceed. The most enlightened and the most benighted, the most refined and the most savage, are all in their own way giving utterance to this problem. Manifold and numerous have been the solutions proposed.

Nowhere has this question elicited more deep and earnest thought than in India. The whole system of Hinduism is, in reality an elaborate answer to this momentous query. I need not stop to prove to you the futility and falsehood of this and every other idolatrous system. Most of you have weighed Hinduism in the balances, and found it wanting. It is probable, that not one now before me is a conscientious believer in the faith of his ancestors

You have either *openly* repudiated that faith, or you outwardly conform to its usages, whilst you inwardly condemn them.

What answer then have *you* to propose to this all-absorbing question? I suspect that if each of you were to adventure a reply, the answers would be far from one and uniform; Though doubtless in one respect—a *negative* one,—they would resemble each other. Whatever means of pardon and peace might be suggested, they would all be destitute of one grand feature. The idea of *Redemption*, strictly and properly, would find no place therein.

Probably the answer of most would be to the following effect “God is infinite in mercy and love; therefore He is ready freely to forgive and embrace the repentant sinner.” True, God *is* merciful—He is the Ocean of love and mercy. He *is* ready to welcome the weeping, contrite sinner. But my friends, mercy is not the only, nor is it the leading attribute of the Deity. Blessed and glorious as the thought of mercy is to us sinful, erring creatures, we must remember that there was a time when the Holy One dwelt alone, in the blissful solitude of his own perfections. Throughout the boundless universe there was no creature on whom mercy could be displayed. As regards its *exercise*, that lovely attribute was as though it were not. But God was ever *holy, infinitely holy*. Holiness is the fundamental characteristic of the divine nature. Out of holiness *justice* has its origin. Since God is infinitely holy, He must be perfectly just. The creation of rational and intelligent creatures necessitated the giving of a Law whereby they would be governed. This Law must have been in accordance with the holy nature of the Law-giver. Consequently any infringement of that Law must be not only an act of daring rebellion against divine authority, but an act utterly repugnant to the divine character. Now if a *single* act of transgression involve so much wickedness, what must be the condition, of a man who, not once, nor twice, but thousands upon thousands of times, by thought, word, and deed, has done despite to the holy Law of God? Shall we presume to say, shall we venture to hope, that all this accumulated mass of iniquity can be washed away by a few tears of penitential sorrow? Is it reasonable, is it probable to suppose, that at the simple cry for pardon, the voice of divine justice shall be hushed, and the criminal fully and freely acquitted? Do our instincts teach us this lesson? Do not our convictions pay homage to justice? Amongst men what is the character which evokes our reverence and affection? It is *not* the simply merciful man, who is too kind to be just, too tender to punish. A feeling akin to contempt is experienced towards such a person, and all the more in proportion to the dignity and importance of the post which he fills. It is not less the demand of the human heart, than the injunction of the Scripture—“He that ruleth over men *must be just*.” A Ruler may or may not be merciful, but he *must be just*.

If his justice be tempered with mercy, that will add beauty to his character and lustre to his reign; but if justice be sacrificed to mercy, there is an end to the honor of his person, and the happiness and security of his kingdom.

It requires but little reflection to discern how totally impracticable is the principle of free forgiveness in most of the relations of life. Take the case of a family, or a school, or a nation, in which the discipline of punishment is never known. Who does not perceive that utter confusion and disorder would be the inevitable result? Such a mode of government could not fail to deprave the moral standard; and the vast distinction between right and wrong would be gradually obliterated;*

The idea, that *repentance* is, of itself, sufficient to procure a free pardon, is equally opposed to experience and analogy. Not unfrequently indeed, we hear repentance described as a kind of *atonement* for guilt. Thus, *unwittingly* a degree of assent is accorded to the principle we are aiming to establish. But surely, there is something very incongruous in the notion, that a sinner is, by his sorrow for his sin, paying a price for his pardon. Who does not see that the very essence of genuine repentance consists in the entire absence of such a thought? Fancy a sinner striving to make himself a worthy recipient of God's mercy, by bewailing his utter unworthiness of it.

But probably it will be argued "Repentance puts the sinner in a state which makes it possible for God to exercise mercy towards him."

Now it is not for us to prescribe limits to divine power. But the question for us is, not what God *can* do, but what He *will* do.

* It is true that Christianity enjoins the duty of forgiveness upon men in their *individual* capacity; but the following extract shews how little this has to do with the point under discussion—"It is obvious indeed, on a moment's reflection, that the duty of man to forgive the trespasses of his neighbour, rest precisely upon those features of human nature which cannot by any analogy be regarded as representing an image of God. Man is not the author of the moral law; he is not, as man, the moral Governor of his fellows; he has no authority, merely as man, to punish moral transgressions as such. It is not as sin, but as *injury*, that vice is a transgression against man; It is not that his holiness is outraged, but that his rights or his interests are impaired. The duty of forgiveness is imposed as a check, not upon the justice, but upon the selfishness of man; it is not designed to extinguish his indignation against vice, but to restrain his tendency to exaggerate his own personal injuries. The reasoner who maintains, that it is a duty in man to forgive sins, therefore it must be morally fitting for God to forgive them also, overlooks the fact, that this duty is binding on man, on account of the weakness, and ignorance, and sinfulness of his nature; that he is bound to forgive, as one who himself needs forgiveness; as one whose weakness renders him liable to suffering; as one whose self-love is ever ready to arouse his passions and pervert his judgment."

Mansel's Lectures.

If we turn our eyes then, to the *natural* government of God in the events of life, we by no means find this doctrine borne out. We perceive that the constitution of nature is such, that very terrible penalties often follow certain vicious actions; health is destroyed, poverty, disgrace, and misery come upon the transgressor like an armed man. Do we not frequently see that the deepest contrition and the bitterest tears of penitential sorrow, are unavailing to arrest the dire consequences of error. These consequences follow notwithstanding; yea, and are often *final* as regards the present life.

There is something to my mind unutterably solemn and impressive in such instances. Gaze upon the spectacle of a man who, as the result, it may be, of but *one* mad or licentious act of youth, has to endure a life-long scene of misery (and such cases are far from rare). What does such a spectacle teach us? Certainly *not* that the Almighty cannot punish; certainly *not* that subsequent sorrow and remorse will abolish the terrible effects of evil. Rather would such an example lead us to anticipate the most fearful punishment for sin in another state—a punishment which nothing, that we ourselves could do, would be able to obviate or lessen. If in the present life such a heavy penalty be exacted for a *single* offence, who shall assign the measure of suffering which in the next life may follow the *countless transgressions* of a whole life? Verily when we look at the operation of God's laws in nature, we see little ground for doubting that there *may* be, what the Scripture positively declares there *is*, "A certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries."

In the light of such examples how vain is all the reasoning about the proportion which punishment should bear to the offence. Doubtless a life-time of disease and suffering appears to us disproportionate as the penalty for a youthful indiscretion; but our *thinking* thus, does not alter the fact, that such a punishment actually does, in some instances, follow such an act.*

On what data then do we presume to form our inferences as to

* It is not necessary to our argument to shew that in *all*, or even in a majority of cases, vice is followed by such penalties. The fact that such instances *do actually occur*, is sufficient to shew how dubious and dangerous is a hope founded on the notion that God will not punish. No one would think of arguing that because all virtuous men are not at present prosperous, that therefore the *tendency* of virtue is not to make men happy and prosperous. So, although at present all vicious men are not actually miserable, yet few persons will deny that vice has a *necessary tendency* to bring suffering and misery. Though certain obstacles in the present life, prevent those natural tendencies from developing themselves in all cases, the fact of such tendencies *existing*, lead us to anticipate a time and a state in which the temporary obstructions will be done away, and the tendencies unopposed work out their own results. The obstructions are *accidental*, the tendencies *essential*.

the degree and duration of the penalty of sin in a future world? Our theory of proportion breaks down entirely, when applied to the present natural government of God, what reason have we to suppose it will apply more accurately to his unseen moral government?*

This leads me to notice a view entertained of late by an important section of educated and thoughtful Bengalees. These persons have seen the error of sacrificing divine justice to mercy. They contend, that since the Almighty is perfectly just He must and will deal with men according to their deserts. Hence it is argued, that either in this world or the next, a just measure of punishment will be inflicted on the sinner. It is admitted that this punishment cannot be done away by repentance. Justice, stern and inflexible, asserts her claim, and that claim will be exacted even to the very last mite. There is no attempt to assign limits to the compensation demanded. It is not said how long or how severely the sinner shall suffer, it is only asserted that the Holy One must be just before He is merciful, and that consequently, the transgressor must exhaust in his own person the pains that a rigid justice has decreed.

Then, it is said, and not till then, will the Almighty extend the sceptre of love and mercy towards him.

These are startling and awful sentiments. These opposing views, furnish a singular illustration, of the total inability of unaided reason to discover a mode of salvation for sinful mortals. The former notion, grasping one divine attribute, makes God simply *merciful*; this view, by laying hold on another, makes him simply *just*. In either case, one side of the divine character is given up. Each fails to set before us a Being at once perfectly just and perfectly merciful. With regard to the last theory, it must be obvious on a moment's reflection, that it leaves no place for mercy. That lovely attribute must wander like Noah's dove, over the surging billows of divine wrath, finding no resting-place for the sole of her foot. There is no room for forgiveness where the sinner has satisfied the claims of justice.

* On the supposition that sinners after death could sin no more, it would still be impossible to say, whether an eternity of punishment might not follow the transgressions of the present life. But surely, the fact of their sinning up to the time of their death, makes it probable that they will go on sinning *after* death; unless indeed, there be reason to believe that their natures will be reformed in another state. But, it may well be asked; what ground is there to think that a man who has been proof against all the influences of divine dealing here, shall be converted by other influences hereafter? If then (which is most in agreement with reason) the sinner be *not* so reformed, he *must* go on sinning; and an eternity of sin involves an eternity of punishment. The thought is truly a dreadful one, but the existence of sin and suffering in the present state is a difficulty the same in kind only less in degree.

Yet, though these views are respectively so opposed to each other, there is a point where they run into one. It is the aim of each to dispense with the doctrine of Redemption. The advocates of both these theories agree to reject the notion of mediation and substitution. The salvation of the guilty through the vicarious sufferings of the innocent, is regarded as utterly unworthy of belief.

It is important to consider this point before laying before you the Christian scheme of man's redemption; for the objection lies at the very root of that scheme. It is then asserted, that the light of reason is antagonistic to the idea of vicarious sufferings. Now I am not going to dispute this position. I am not going to say whether you are right or wrong; I will only point out to you a great and undeniable fact. It is then a fact which cannot be gainsayed, that *propitiatory sacrifices* have some how or other come to be practised in every part of the world. Not only has the blood of birds and beasts been freely shed in deprecation of divine vengeance; but what is far more shocking and perplexing, *human sacrifices* have been of all but universal prevalence. You can hardly lay your finger on a single nation mentioned in history, in which such startling rites were not celebrated. Let me briefly tell you the voice of history on this point.

It represents to us the ancient *Ethiopians* as offering their boys in sacrifice to the Sun and their girls to the Moon. It shews us the skilful and enterprising *Phœnicians* in times of public calamity, appeasing the gods by offering up to them their dearest offspring. Herodotus assures us that the *Scythians* in time of war, offered in bloody sacrifice every hundredth man of their prisoners. Diodorus says, the *Egyptians* sacrificed for the public weal, red-haired men at the tomb of Osiris. *Chinese* history too tells of an aged monarch "Chingtang" who yielded up his life as an atonement for his people's sins. Every body knows that in Druidical times, the shady groves of *England* and *France*, ever and anon witnessed human sacrifices. Of the ancient *Grecians*, Phylarchus testifies, that before going to war, they used to propitiate their gods in the same way. The *Athenians* and *Massilians* used every year to set apart one human victim. After laying upon his head the most dreadful curses imaginable, he was sacrificed, and thus it was believed the rest of the people escaped. Porphyry certifies that in his day, (the 2nd century of the Christian era) the *Romans* every year offered up a man at the shrine of Jupiter. It is certain that in ancient *Persia* the same revolting usage prevailed. Nor is *India* an exception to the rule, for there is the strongest evidence for believing that in olden times, on certain occasions, human victims were sacrificed in this country.

Now, the question which naturally suggests itself is this—what

was the origin of this world-wide custom? I think that we are entitled to say, that expiatory sacrifices originated either with the dictates of *Reason*, or *Interest*, or that they were the result of some *Authoritative injunction*.

You repudiate the idea that Reason could have dictated the utility of such rites. I am inclined to agree with you in this opinion. When we retire within ourselves, and forgetting external associations, try to ascertain what would be reason's voice on such a subject, we feel as though its verdict could hardly be otherwise than unfavourable. It is difficult to conceive that man could by any process of logical deduction, arrive at the conclusion, that by the blood of an irrationable brute, still less by the slaughter of a human being, sin could be obliterated and punishment abolished.

It is a singular confirmation of our joint conclusion in this respect, that we find the ancient Philosophers of Greece and Rome surely puzzled to account for the phenomenon of sacrifices. Pythagoras, Plato, and Porphyry, each express their surprise that an institution, which they describe as at once "dismal and absurd," should have spread throughout the whole world. All this goes, no doubt, to prove, that whatever gave birth to the strange usage, it was *not* the voice of reason.

But men will do many things unreasonable, provided their present *interest* prompt them. Was it then in obedience to the appeals of interest that men began to practise bloody rites? The bare mention of the supposition is sufficient to refute it. What interest could incline men to this course? Would the sight of writhing victims and quivering flesh afford a tempting gratification to the eye? Human instincts recoil from such scenes. Would then, the killing and burning of the firstlings and fatlings of the flock be an act which interest would dictate?* Or would this motive lead men to plunge the sacrificial knife into the bosom of a darling child? No my friends, no, neither Reason nor Interest will afford a clue to the problem.

How then shall we account for it? Are we not shut up to the last proposition, that the institution must be traced up to some *authoritative injunction*, and that some grand primeval tradition handed down for a thousand generations, explains the whole matter? Thus we find ourselves from the very exigencies of the case compelled to seek for some sacred oracle, and to listen to some voice external to man.

Now, on opening the Bible we find that the very first act of acceptable worship recorded therein, was a *Sacrificial* act. "Abel" it is written, "brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and his offering."

* It is clear that the earliest form of sacrifices was that of *burnt-offerings*. The custom of using a portion of the victim as food had a later origin.

Those who admit the truth of the Bible history, can have little room to doubt, that the origin of sacrifices was a *divine intimation* conveyed to our first parents after their fall. Whilst the voice of justice denounced their guilt and fixed its penalty, the voice of mercy uttered words of hope. It pointed to the "woman's seed" the incarnate Redeemer, who should give his life a ransom for the sins of man. Doubtless at that time, as a support to faith and an aid to hope, the typical law of sacrifices was enjoined.

Thus, through the long vista of ages which should intervene before the advent of the Saviour, the ordinance of sacrifices was designed to impress the mind of man with the deep malignity of sin, and to prefigure to him in vivid colours the one great and efficient expiation which the Son of God should accomplish on our behalf.

The pious Abel had no doubt learnt from the precepts and practice of his parents the obligation and purpose of sacrifices. When we read immediately after the Fall, of Adam and his wife being clothed with the skins of animals, we can hardly be wrong in inferring, that those animals had been the propitiatory victims offered by the guilty pair in obedience to divine direction.

Passing from Adam to Noah, we behold the Patriarch surrounded by his family. They had just stepped, as it were, into a new world. Desolation and death reigned around. They were the sole representatives of human kind in the wide, wide world. They were to begin to rear up again the human fabric which had been so rudely demolished. How did they begin? What act marked their introduction to the new world? It was the self-same act of sacrifice which characterised the devotions of Adam and Abel. Can we doubt that the remembrance of the terrible past, the hopes and fears for the uncertain future, and the appalling aspect of all things around, would conspire to stamp the memory of that great holocaust indelibly on their minds? Thus would the original institution of sacrifices receive additional force and confirmation. Thus too, as the human family branched out and divided itself amongst the various countries of the earth, would the grand fundamental idea be transmitted, that without shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. Such an idea *has* been transmitted and has pervaded the whole human race. Here then we have a great fact, and a simple and sufficient reason for that fact.*

If any one rejects the scriptural account of the divine origin of the institution, he is bound to shew some other more probable

* It is a notable fact, the force of which must strike any unbiassed mind, that side by side with the practice of sacrifices a *tradition of the Flood* is to be met with, in some form or other, amongst all nations. This circumstance must be admitted to add considerable weight to the argument here pursued.

solution. But rejecting the doctrine of a divine intimation, he is thrown back upon the voice of reason or intuition. If no *external* decree is permitted to account for the matter, then must it be admitted, that some innate sense or conviction has led man to rely upon expiatory rites. And if the intuitive sense of a few individuals in a certain age, stand out in contrast to the unanimous consent of mankind in *all* ages, surely *their* sense must be regarded as abnormal and somewhat unreal.

Are then propitiatory sacrifices a matter of Revelation or Intuition? One alternative or the other you must accept. It does not matter for the subject of our lecture *which* you elect. In either ~~case~~ their origin is *divine*. The Almighty conveyed his will in this respect to our forefathers either *externally* by an injunction or *internally* by a monition.

It may probably be urged that even the admission of this point would fail to establish the Christian doctrine of redemption through the vicarious sufferings of Christ; for you may argue "Do we not see that everywhere, the sacrifices offered, are regarded in themselves as final and complete? no idea of their typical nature appears, no notion of their pointing out some one sacrifice of transcendent power and efficacy; what then do they prove for Christianity?"

The answer to this objection is very simple. It is quite in accordance with the history of the world, and may be illustrated by a thousand examples, that external usages maintain their ground amongst men ages after the peculiar object and design of those usages are forgotten.

There is no doubt that the institution of sacrifices was attended by special instructions as to their typical and prophetic import. Man was taught not to ground his hopes on the blood of beasts which could never take away sin; but through this medium to "behold the Lamb of God which should take away the sins of the world." No careful student of the Bible can for a moment doubt, that the holy Sages of patriarchal and prophetic times, did grasp the mysterious aim of the institution, and with a spirit of hallowed, yearning expectancy, did by the eye of faith contemplate the coming Saviour. Speaking of one of these, Jesus himself testifies, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad."

However, I am not now speaking of the prevalence of sacrifices in order to prove the Christian scheme of Redemption, but only to meet and refute a certain fundamental objection to that scheme. The grand basis of the Gospel plan is *substitution*—the substitution of the Holy for the vile, the Innocent for the guilty. The Gospel depicts all mankind as defiled in nature and corrupt in practise. It represents man as a transgressor of a divine and immutable law;

and as being in consequence, obnoxious to the justice of a holy God. It declares that, "Every mouth must be stopped and all the world become guilty before God." It shews, that there was absolutely no hope of man's salvation, except by the eternal Son of God assuming our nature, standing in our stead, obeying the Law which we had broken, taking our guilt on his own sacred head, and laying down his precious life for our sakes. The Gospel tells us plainly that the effect of his thus becoming man, thus obeying, thus suffering, thus dying for us, is, in the case of every humble believer, to free the soul from curse and condemnation, and to place the individual in such a position, that he shall be accepted as righteous with God; yea, become a beloved child of the Most High, and an inheritor of everlasting bliss.

Now against this whole scheme it is objected, that the notion of substitution and imputation is utterly untenable. That the innocent should suffer for the guilty, and that the merits of the one should be attributed to the other, appears to the objectors so improbable and absurd, as to be rejected almost without a hearing.

In answer to such a view, the fact of the universality of propitiatory sacrifices may well be opposed. Whatever may have been the origin of sacrifices, they at least serve to shew that the idea of substitution has somehow or other pervaded—nay, *permeated* the human family.

It is a matter which admits of no question, that amongst idolatrous nations, a *vicarious* efficacy is supposed to attach to the sacrifice. The Deity is believed to be propitiated and the offerer benefited by the sufferings or the blood of the innocent victim.

Thus, two leading points, commonly objected against Christianity, are seen to be strictly in accordance with the common sense of mankind. The first is, that simple reformation and repentance are not of themselves sufficient to salvation; and secondly, that in some way or other *intervention* and *mediation* are needful. The *first* is expressive of a want in man; the *second* is an attempt to supply that want. Surely the contemplation of this circumstance ought to make any thoughtful man pause before he scout and ridicule the Christian scheme as absurd and incredible.

Still you reply, "The main difficulty remains; whatever may have been the practise and theory of mankind in this respect, the eternal principles of right and justice forbid the idea of the innocent suffering for the guilty, and of the guilty by such sufferings being acquitted." I remember full well the case of a venerable Clergyman in England who had listened for half a century to the clanging of the bells in his church-tower. On one occasion a friend called upon him whilst the ringing was going on. The friend was so disconcerted by the deafening din, that he asked the aged Vicar how he could endure such a tumult; The old man

started, bent his ear to listen and replied—"Well I was really not aware the bells were ringing."

My friends; the common events of life are those bells. These, day by day, loudly reverberate the very note in Christianity to which you are objecting; Yet,—I suppose, because those events are ordinary and general, therefore you no longer detect the specific lesson which they teach.

What! is it so, that under the natural government of the Almighty, the innocent never suffer for the guilty? A moment's thought will shew you how very many instances of the kind are to be met with. We have already pointed out that the constitution of nature often admits of very terrible punishment overtaking the individual transgressor. You have only to extend your glance a little further to trace out other and more strange results of crime. See the hoary hairs of a worthy father brought down with sorrow and shame to the grave by a profligate son. Behold, a tender virtuous wife dying broken in heart, as the consequence of a husband's infidelity and cruelty. See the innocent offspring bearing through life the stigma of a father's disgrace, or enduring in their suffering bodies the penalty of a father's licentiousness; yea, gaze further on still, and you shall see the dire effects descending, it may be, to the third and fourth generation. See a whole realm plunged into distress and suffering through the tyranny or ambition of a monarch; behold his guiltless subjects, to save their king and country, slaughtered by thousands on the battle field, whilst myriads of weeping widows and helpless orphans bitterly bemoan their cruel fate. Nay, look where you will, the same feature meets you. As in domestic and political life, so in the walks of *business*, the innocent are often compelled sorely to suffer for the guilty. The rashness of unprincipled speculators; or the duplicity of a bank manager, hurls multitudes of honest and industrious men into poverty and woe.

But it would be endless to point out the number of instances and the variety of ways, in which we see with our own eyes illustrations of the principle so much objected to in the Gospel.

The truth is, God has so constituted the human family, has so bound the different members and relationships of that family together, has so interwoven the interests of one with another, that it cannot but happen that the innocent shall often suffer for the guilty. What then becomes of the objection we are considering? As a presumption against the divine origin of Christianity, it clearly falls to the ground; and the man who would reject the Gospel scheme because it involves this principle, must on the same ground surrender his theism, and cease to believe in a God of nature.

But in point of fact the objection urged, tells with still greater force against natural religion than against Christianity. The Christian scheme of redemption represents the spotless Jesus as *voluntarily*

suffering in our stead. His was a free-will offering on our behalf. "No man" said he "taketh away my life, but I lay it down of myself." But, what for the most part is the case in nature? We see that men are actually compelled *against their will* to suffer for the faults of others. Nature's laws go on dealing on innocent heads, the penalty of another's crime, regardless altogether of their willingness to bear it.

Another point too deserves to be considered. The sufferings which men have to endure for the errors of their fellows, are very generally of an *arbitrary* character. However wise and good the reason may be, we can see no possible object, no ultimate design or aim in the dispensation. How different is the aspect borne by the vicarious sufferings of Jesus! This was no meaningless sacrifice. A conspicuous, and a glorious end was thereby to be attained. He suffered truly "the just for the unjust," but it was "to bring us to God." He was truly "made to be a curse for us," but it was in order "to redeem us from the curse of the Law." He was indeed "made to be sin for us who knew no sin" but it was "that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." He was truly "wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities," but it was that we "by his stripes might be healed."

Now, if we listen to the voice of our instincts (and to these *you* at least are bound to attend) we shall perceive that these two considerations not only weaken, but positively *annihilate* the above objection in its bearing upon Christianity. We not only endure, but laud and magnify as noble and generous, acts of self-devotion and self-sacrifice for the good of others. The *Physician*, who during the ravages of a deadly plague, rushes to the scene of danger, and whilst struggling to save the sufferers, himself falls a victim and dies,—the *Patriot*, who to avert his country's disgrace and bondage gladly yields up his life on the high places of the field,—the *Philanthropist*, who like Howard, wears out his energies and expires whilst labouring to redeem the fallen and lost—who ever thinks of complaining in such cases of the injustice of mediation and substitution? On the contrary, as we listen to the tale of their devotion, our hearts throb with admiration and love; we sing their praises to our children's children, and it may be, teach the cold marble to perpetuate their fame to generations yet unborn.

Now my friends, what does the Gospel present to our view but a scene of matchless self-devotion to rescue the wretched and undone? Suppose, for a moment, mankind to be in that condition which the Bible declares they *are* in,—fallen, lost, ruined; and verily the aspect of the world at large, accords with that description; Suppose further, that no human efforts grounded on natural religion or philosophy could restore man to his lost estate; and I maintain, the history of the world for 6000 years past supports this

inference ; was it under these circumstances improbable, that a God of infinite love and compassion, should interpose in some extraordinary way to effect the redemption of his creatures ? The Gospel then tells us that He *has* thus interposed. It points out to us the ever blessed and glorious Trinity uniting in one grand effort to save our sinful race. We behold, as it were, deep in the recesses of a past eternity, a divine counsel deliberating on the vital question "How shall guilty man be saved?" Short and simple *you* think, would be the reply to such a query. Your prescription would be, "Freely forgive, or amply punish the sinner." But God's ways are not as your ways, nor his thoughts as your thoughts. Neither the one alternative nor the other would have met the requirements of the case. The glorious attributes of the divine nature must be upheld, and his immutable law must be magnified in the sight of a gazing listening universe. It was not a case for alternatives. *Forgiveness and punishment must go together.* The one must be free and the other must be complete. Here was the problem. How in the act of saving the sinner could justice and mercy harmonise? Freely to pardon, or amply to punish the sinner, would be alike subversive of the harmony. The more profoundly you study this point, the more strongly will a conviction of the need of substitution and mediation force itself upon you.

But who should be the substitute ? Who should bridge over by his voluntary obedience and suffering, the chasm which separates guilty man from a holy God ? Think again, and you will see that no finite creature could accomplish the mighty task. The creature can by no act whatever over-step or exceed the bounds of his own *personal* obligation to the Creator. Hence, "no man can redeem his brother, or give to God a ransom for him. It cost more to redeem our souls." No, not the brightest Seraph, nor the mightiest Archangel of the heavenly host, could be man's substitute ; and for this additional reason, that they are not partakers of man's nature.

The true substitute for man is *man* ; hence the Redeemer must be man. But the substitution of a *mere man* for men would be unavailing ; hence arises the necessity that the Redeemer should be *more than man*—more than any creature. *He must be divine.* Such a Redeemer hath Almighty wisdom and love provided. O marvel of marvels ! The Triune Jehovah, looking down from his eternal throne, beholds rebel man, self-destroyed, about to sink into the abyss of merited woe ; immediately a voice comes booming from the skies—"Save him from going down into the pit, I have found a ransom." The everlasting Father sends forth from his bosom the Son of his love. To that divine Son was committed the execution of the wondrous scheme. Readily, ah ! *gladly* He ac-

cepts the commission, "Lo I come" he responds, "to do thy will O my God, I am content to do it, yea, thy law is within my heart."

Long, dark, and dreary ages were to pass over before He actually came in human flesh. Meanwhile the darkness was becoming more dense, and the festering sore of the world's corruption more rank. Yet, chide not I pray you the delay, until you can shew why ten thousand remedies for man's natural and physical woes lie hidden for still longer ages in nature's womb.

At least, gentle rays preceded the coming Light; and though the Physician of souls, *in person*, was late in appearing, he from the first dispensed the "balm of Gilead" for the healing of the nations. He is designated "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world"* We have seen how the patriarchs, by the aid of sacrifices, prefigured and reposed upon his saving work. You may see too if you study the Mosaic dispensation, in what burning characters the Gospel story was read to Israel of old.

"The Lamb, the dove, set forth
His perfect innocence,
Whose blood of matchless worth,
Should be the soul's defence.
They taught the need of other blood,
To reconcile the world to God.

The Scape-goat on his head
The people's trespass bore,
And to the desert led,
Was to be seen no more.
In him our Surety seemed to say
Behold! I bear your sins away.

Dipp'd in his fellows blood
The living bird went free,
The type well understood,
Express'd the sinner's plea;
Describ'd a guilty soul enlarged.
And by the Saviour's death discharged."

At length as a scripture states "When the fulness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law." (Gal. iv. 4). In the womb of a pure virgin did He assume our nature. But, that He might be free from all taint of our natural corruption, he was conceived by the miraculous agency of the Holy Ghost. Ridicule not my friends, the doctrine of the

* Rev. xiii. 8.

Incarnation. If you do so, it shall be to your peril and confusion. Be it the voice of reason or of revelation, the hopes and expectations of mankind have ever pointed to some incarnation of the Deity. Rude and even revolting as are the figurations of the idea, *the idea exists*, and it has ever been feeling after a realisation.

It has been realised, but not in the deified heroes of Assyria, Egypt, Greece and Rome; not in the incarnations of Vishnu, but in the person of Jesus Christ. He was the true *धर्मदाता*. The world has ever affected a God manifest in the flesh; but the world knew of no incarnation except that of a hero, a voluptuary, or a recluse. Being of the earth, earthy, they filled up the great idea with a gross earthly outline. Not the least convincing proof of the divinity of the Christian incarnation, is the broad contrast which its features present to all human inventions. And this circumstance at the same time shews, how it came to pass that He, the holy and true, was despised and rejected of men. To use the words of St. John. "He came into the world but the world received Him not. He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, but the world knew Him not." John i. 10 11.

The passage above quoted, tells us, that the incarnate Son of God was "made under the law." Mere mortals as a matter of necessity come into the world subjected to the divine law. But it was from the mouth of the second person in the glorious Trinity that the "fiery law" had proceeded. As the Almighty law-giver He was above the law. But as the Redeemer of men, He became the *representative man*; hence he was made under the law." He, as man, and for men rendered such an obedience to the moral law—so complete, so perfect, so spotless, as to exhaust its utmost demands. Thus the law was fulfilled on our behalf, and thus a positive righteousness was wrought out for our sakes. Through and by this righteousness the humble believer in Christ is justified. In the words of scripture, "This righteousness, *is unto and upon all them that believe in Him*".

By this and this alone are they fitted to stand in the sight of the holy and heart-searching God.

But the expression "under the law" involved in the case of Jesus, more than a fulfilling of the law. That law had been broken by man. A broken law claims satisfaction and inflicts a penalty. The penalty of breaking God's law is, "death" eternal death. "The soul that sinneth it shall die." Ezek xviii. 4.

Again the mediation of the God-man appears. As the apostle St. Paul argues "being found in fashion as a man (i. e. standing as man's representative) he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." 2 Philip, ii. 8. Yes, the stigma of our guilt afflicted his righteous soul, and the punishment of a world's iniquities came down upon his sacred head. O my friends! come with me to Calvary. Take off your

shoes from off your feet, for it is holy ground. Behold the man! watch his writhing agonies. Think you, that ghastly look of woe,—that deep dark cloud which rests on that gentle brow, are caused by *physical* torture? I tell you *no*! Listen awhile, and you shall know the cause. His lips open,—a bitter astonished cry escapes them,—“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” Study these words, my friends! and they will tell you *why* Jesus died. He voluntarily placed himself in the sinner’s stead, He consented to bear our curse, to pay the price of our ransom; hence it pleased the Father to bruise him? to put him to grief, and to make his soul an offering for sin. Isa. liii. 10.

Now, what do you say to all this? Do you still say—“Strange and incredible!” *Strange*, it truly is—the strangest tale of love and mercy that mortal ears can listen to.

But what is there incredible? Not that Jesus thus died; for this is a simple fact of history—Not that He in his own person, did not merit such a death; for you yourselves admit that He was holy and without blame. But you think it was incredible that He suffered thus as our substitute and mediator. You find no difficulty in believing that God permitted the best, the meekest, the holiest of men to suffer thus, for no cause whatever; but it is, you think, totally incredible that He should then have been suffering for *our* sins; and this though myriads of cases of vicarious suffering meet your eye. So too, the notion of Christ’s sufferings being not only causeless but objectless, is easily embraced by you; but to suppose that there was an end worthy of the sacrifice, and that a world’s redemption hung upon that fact, is in your idea altogether beyond credit.

I am persuaded, if only men who talk so much of following the light of nature, would candidly open their minds to that light, it would reveal to them, not indeed the Gospel, but their own folly and ignorance in objecting against it.

Every ordinary student of nature, must at least be aware of the operation of two distinct classes of laws. There are *primary* laws in nature; but ever and anon we find these intersected and modified by *secondary* laws. A man, by a course of vice has contracted a certain disease, by a *primary* law that malady progresses until it terminates in death; and probably no efforts of the individual himself could prevent that consummation. But a *secondary* law comes into action; the skilful endeavours of a physician interpose, and in consequence the man lives. A profligate spendthrift has not only beggared himself, but utterly ruined his prospects for life. By a *primary* law he must remain hopelessly undone; but the practical aid of a generous friend intervenes, and the evil consequences which must have gone on, are arrested. The ruined man is saved.

Now apply this principle to the Gospel. Man sinned and fell. In accordance with the primary law of God's moral government, he must perish eternally. But Christianity, as a secondary law of love and mercy steps in. The intervention of the blessed Jesus averts the dread effects of man's rebellion. The shaft of divine justice which was falling, as if by gravitation, on the head of the sinner, is received in the person of the loving Saviour, and thus the penitent, believing sinner escapes.

But, here a solemn and practical thought suggests itself. Secondary laws are subject to our control in a way that primary laws are not. You can suppose the diseased sufferer rejecting the physician's prescriptions, and the ruined spendthrift spurning the proffered aid of his benefactor. In this case the chances are, that no other secondary remedial law comes into play, and death and destruction follow as a matter of course. O my friends, beware of proudly and ignorantly rejecting the one and only means of salvation open to you. Embrace the Lord Jesus Christ as your Redeemer; humbly as little children repose in his finished work; and pardon, justification and eternal glory are yours. But I solemnly warn you, that by rejecting Christ as your Refuge, you are shutting yourselves out from every hope of salvation; for the word of inspiration declares* "There is no other name under heaven, given amongst men, whereby we must be saved" but the name of Jesus Christ.

* Act. iv. 12.

HOLINESS.

A LECTURE TO EDUCATED NATIVES OF INDIA
DELIVERED IN SAINT PAUL'S CATHEDRAL, CALCUTTA,
ON FRIDAY NOVEMBER 17, 1865.

BY
REV. J. WELLAND, B. A.
MISSIONARY IN KIDDERPORE.

CALCUTTA :
MESSRS. R. C. LEPAGE & Co.

1865.

BISHOP'S COLLEGE PRESS.

MCCCCLXV.

H O L I N E S S.



If there be in the subject we have to discuss this evening, little to attract general curiosity or to offer hope of awakening general interest, there is at least the very satisfactory assurance that I shall enjoy in a large measure the sympathies of those few who are willing to examine it. I gladly encourage myself with the belief, that an audience assembled to listen to a lecture about holiness, is composed of those to whom idle controversy has ceased to be a pleasure and in whose hearts aspirations after better things have begun to find place. It will be no small joy to have in any degree helped on its way one earnest mind in the pursuit of holiness; and the feeling that however much we may differ in opinion as to the means to be employed, we are united in admiration of the end to be attained, will enable me to address you with more confidence and you to listen with more indulgence. Yet it would be mischievous to ignore what we cannot forget, that the difference in our opinions may be, and probably is, very wide, and concerns matters of the very highest moment. I do not even know that we are willing to start from the same position; and I fear we can seldom advance far together without some controversy as to the path we adopt. Nor can we afford to diminish the importance of our differences while most earnestly avoiding any exaggeration of it. Even here, however, there is good reason to believe that our discussions shall be less unhappy than in other fields of religious controversy. We shall not only approach our enquiries with less captious minds, but the very arguments themselves which shall engage us will less provoke a spirit of scepticism and suspicion. It must be admitted that in the more usual and more public questions of religious controversy—in the discussion of what are called the external evidences of Christianity—where the appeal is almost wholly to the intellect, considerable danger is inevitably attached to all our examinations. A mind at all dishonest—and which of us can boast a love of truth altogether and always free from prejudice—possesses ever a close affinity for all that is sceptical in the arguments advanced or the facts set forth. Of necessity the rigorous demands of truth evoke all the resources of falsehood, and that the triumph of the right may be complete the utmost ingenuity of the wrong must first be wholly exhausted; but ere this happy conclusion is reached the mind may too easily

persuade itself that truth has become less certain. Excessive subtlety suggests weakness, and suspicion is awakened that such skill may in its turn be refuted by something still more refined. It is, alas, mournfully true that some of the finest minds of this country, trained in the cunning fence of logical niceties, have yielded themselves converts to the belief that nothing is true, because nothing can be certainly proved. To their minds the very ingenuity of an argument only adds to the presumption that a still more exquisite ingenuity may yet be found to disprove it, that if wit can accomplish so much there is all the *less* reason for assuming that it will not accomplish more. And when we turn from metaphysical speculations to the more tangible and better defined facts of science and history, the dishonest mind, more intent on evading truth than eager to recognise its claims, can find still an excuse for its inveterate scepticism. It will hasten to take refuge from what it calls dogmatism in the plea of human ignorance; we do not yet know all things, it will argue, and amongst the unknown there may linger still a fact which shall overturn our present conclusions and which, though it cannot avail to nullify past events, may teach us to view them in a new light and interpret them in a manner the directly opposite of our received readings. It will gladly remind itself that the supposed discovery of to-day may become valueless to-morrow, that the chronology of the Bible seems to lie at the mercy of geological explorations, that the interpretation of ancient records may be presently modified by a new system of translation or set aside by a fresh tablet from the mounds of Nineveh or Persepolis, and that therefore nothing can be known as positively true till history has confessed her last fact and science revealed her ultimate secret. Purely intellectual arguments must always be liable to abuses like these, and there is little in their nature to awaken the conscience to a sense of its own dishonesty. It is then, as I said, particularly hopeful that the subject before us this evening not only appeals to those who have more than a mere intellectual interest in the truth of religion, but appeals also to that in us which is higher than intellect, the moral nature itself. Whatever homage we pay, as we are bounden, to the dictates of reason, we shall acknowledge the presence of a higher faculty not to bias her judgement but to rebuke her licence, not to emancipate us from her control but to teach us that even reason must listen to conscience while conscience listens to God.

Strengthened by such support we may lay it down as a first principle that whatever is holy is also true. I am well aware that this has not always been admitted, and that even still there are some who contend that superstition—or a belief in what is not true—may be, and often is, both holy and productive of holiness. Some, for instance, endeavour to persuade others, not to say themselves, that

the worship of idols, although in itself grossly false, a horrible offence against truth, has yet a sanctifying effect upon the ignorant and may be called holy worship. Others again insist that the legends about Hindu gods popularly believed, tend to purify the minds of the simple and ought to be recognised as holy, although certainly untrue. For us at present, however, such sophistries have no attraction. Believing in God, the God of holiness and truth, we cannot admit for a moment that falsehood and holiness can ever be allied, or that God can love as holy what He hates as a lie. Conscience which recognises God as the source of all holiness, equally acknowledges Him as the fountain of all truth. Without then pausing to listen to argument on such a point we at once accept the proposition that whatever is holy is true; that it will be sufficient to demonstrate the holiness of a religion to prove its truth, and the holiness of a man's conduct to satisfy ourselves that the principles by which he is influenced or the instincts by which he is actuated are true also.

But it will very properly be asked, Is holiness any more easily defined than truth itself? Is there any real gain in summoning to the assistance of reason the moral faculty; for if the intellect may, through its native weakness or influenced by insidious prejudice, fail in the discovery of truth, can we promise ourselves that the conscience shall certainly guide us aright? Those who, in spite of the abundant evidence on every side of the imperfect state of the conscience, still maintain that human nature is not fallen and contains in itself all that is necessary to its advance to the highest and holiest existence possible to creatures, may find this question not difficult to answer, and may consent to appeal at once to the dictates of conscience and make its utterances their only standard of holiness. But I cannot believe that we practically have this confidence in ourselves. While then perfectly satisfied that the fall of man's nature may be demonstrated and its insufficiency to recover itself proved beyond doubt, I can afford for the present to waive the discussion of that point, content that in this we are agreed, that *our* consciences, whatever they be capable of, have not at present attained such perfection as that we can entrust ourselves wholly to their guidance.

There are two respects in which conscience may be defective in judging of holiness, and I think we shall confess that it is quite possible our consciences may fail in both these particulars. Speaking of the moral faculty in popular language, we can conceive of it as not sufficiently appreciating holiness when discovered, as being feeble in its hatred of sin and love of righteousness, and so doing injustice to the excellence of moral purity; and again, we may readily understand that through lack of enlightenment it may fail to discover clearly the distinction in all cases between right and wrong, be-

tween righteousness and sin. We may have detected in ourselves a strange tolerance of what we know to be sinful, and we may from time to time have discovered that we have been living all unconsciously in the practise of a sin hated as soon as recognised to be such. Either of these defects, it is plain, is fatal to the theory which makes conscience the ultimate judge of holiness; and as we are certainly liable to both, we find ourselves, when on the very threshold of our enquiry, confronted with a difficulty which threatens to be insuperable.

As it is most important that we should not underrate this difficulty, and as the attempt to ignore it has already wrought much mischief in this city, let me endeavour to illustrate it so that we may more readily perceive its true dimensions. It is notorious that in all matters of taste a standard of excellence is still a desideratum—a desideratum, however, only in so far as its presence might save from error, for that its absence is a stimulus to exertion none can doubt. Till this standard be supplied, there must be, as regards matters of taste, difference in opinion and variety in appreciation. In the study of music, for instance, there must be, within certain limits, controversy as to what is good music; and even among those whose judgments coincide on this point, various degrees of enjoyments of music will exist. Some will approve what others condemn, and one will derive intense delight from what awakens scarce any emotion of pleasure in another. So likewise in painting and sculpture and architecture and poetry there is always room for variety of criticism and difference of enjoyment; and in all these cases taste may be cultivated in both respects, the judgment may be improved by increase of knowledge, and the pleasure may be heightened by a careful attention to the gratification of feeling. But so, also, may taste become vitiated, the perception of this kind of excellence blunted, and a morbid appetite be created for what criticism condemns as faulty. Up to this day the oriental and the occidental notions of good music hopelessly differ. The Indian wearies of what delights the European, while the disciple of Mendelsohn or Beethoven perceives no melody in the compositions of Tansen. It is possible, moreover, for the Indian musician so to inform his taste that he may unhesitatingly acknowledge the superiority of western skill while at the same time he enjoys more thoroughly the cadences which made harmony with his soul in early childhood; and again the foreigner, conscious the while that his taste has ceased to be healthy, may find himself attracted by the half barbaric chants and wild intonations of Hindustani music. But why talk of mere possibilities—it is a well known fact that nations have for ages together, through neglect of the fine arts, become wholly vitiated in taste, so that they lost the power of appreciating excellence of this kind and contracted a debased fondness for what

was hideous and degrading. Even still none pretends to have reached the limit of perfection in art. There is none so arrogant as to boast that his mind is the final court of appeal in æsthetics. Improvement is still coveted by all, and most by those who have most cultivated their taste; such men, while they hold fast by well ascertained principles, being always most eager for more information and most watchful that they do not suffer their feelings to be pleased with what their judgment disallows.

If then in matters of taste we dare not constitute ourselves supreme judges, much less may we do so in matters of conscience. The analogy between the two suggests to us our danger and the difficulty of altogether escaping it, reminding us of the probability of mistake and illustrating the imperfection of the only mode of avoiding it; while the contrast between the two admonishes us of the transcendent importance of taking heed to these lessons when we discuss the awful subject of holiness and the interests of eternity. For while in the one case the imperfection of our ideal is of small practical importance even should we overlook its defects, in the other to stereotype as perfect a defective conception is to destroy for ever our hopes of the only real bliss. By æsthetics we enjoy intercourse with the beautiful in nature—nature imperfect like ourselves, “made subject to vanity;”—but holiness is the atmosphere we must learn to breathe before we can have communion with the infinitely perfect God. Good taste admits us to treasures which are ours in proportion as we can enjoy them, and to a fellow-feeling with men not greatly more refined than ourselves; holiness is to conduct us to the sympathies of God whose purity is complete, and who is not a *thing* to be more or less appropriated, but a *Person* to give or withhold His affection according to His own good pleasure. I think you will find in all those theories which attempt to account for sin as a mere imperfection,—a weakness more to be pitied than hated, a malady to be remedied not a crime to be punished,—I think you will find this fatal error underlying the whole scheme, God in all the purity of His perfect nature is forgotten and no higher standard is proposed to man than the conceptions of his own fond heart. Charity teaches us to be gentle in our judgment of others, and a consciousness of our own weakness forbids us to be exacting in our demands upon our neighbour. But philanthropy is only half of religion. The same law that commands us to love our neighbour as ourself, requires of us first to love God with all our heart and mind and soul and strength. “To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction” cannot be called piety if there be not at the same time the keeping ourself “unspotted from the world.” Job, while his friends were before him, could justify his conduct and maintain his integrity; nor could their expositions of the Divine

character humble his honest self-respect so long as their presence compelled him to compare himself with man. But when God spoke to him in the greatness of His power Job's vindication of self was silenced: "Behold I am vile," he said, "what shall I answer thee; I will lay my hand upon my mouth: ... I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear but now mine eye seeth thee, wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes." If, then, you would judge of your relation to holiness you must seek your standard not in yourself nor in man but in God, searching for Him in His own revelation, there to become aware how much conscience itself is fallen and how vast a distance stretches between your most cherished ideals and the reality of His perfect holiness; "for the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart, neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight, but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do."

It was necessary thus to warn you of the nature of this difficulty, which meets us as soon as we essay a judgment regarding true holiness, lest you should imagine that an appeal to your own feelings sanctioned at all that fatal error which constitutes the mind itself the only infallible judge. I have no other security against misleading you than is afforded by the teaching of God's holy word, the Bible, and a reliance on His Holy Spirit to enable me rightly to understand that teaching; and among you the only heart I can appeal to is that which, conscious of its own feebleness and self-deception, seeks in faith the assistance of the same Spirit that it may both recognise and love the true holiness.

It ought to be steadily borne in mind that the educated natives of India are placed at some disadvantage in respect of the impression which a view of Christian holiness is generally calculated to produce. They are introduced to the Gospel at a time when its very success has curiously, but in a manner all along inevitable, furnished opportunity for calling its high claims in question. Just as the sun, which at its rise fixes upon it the awe-struck gaze of all beholders both by the novelty of its glory contrasted with the blackness and shame of night, and by the majesty with which it asserts its rule, awakening with new life every thing that had died through weariness and dismay, unlocking the gates of industry, peopling the fields with many peasants, and thronging the streets with busy crowds amidst the din and turmoil of renovated trade—this sun, when its struggle with darkness is past and its influence become universal, soon ceases to be remembered, and men, absorbed in their immediate business, while using to the utmost the light of

day, are ready to deem it an impertinence to be reminded of that small disc glistening in mid-heaven, the source of all that brightness without which they could not live : so has it happened to the Gospel. And the educated native of India, like a late riser to whom the glories of sunrise are unknown, is introduced into the civilised world only at a time when its inhabitants are so accustomed to the day that they have forgotten its source, the sun. It was, you will admit, inevitable that a heavenly religion should marvellously improve human society far beyond the circle of those who were conscious of its direct influence upon them, and then again inevitable that in proportion to the universality of this improvement the means of tracing it must disappear and the exact limits of its influence become continually less marked. Books are frequently placed in your hands full of Christian truth so far as they are wise, but in which all, or almost all, obligation to Christianity is systematically denied, and the legitimate results of Christian doctrine deliberately ascribed to the influence of other powers to which in truth they owe nothing. You are brought in contact with a morality which elaborately disclaims the bigotry, as it calls it, of a settled belief or a definite creed, without confessing that the world had never seen it, if it had not first seen Christ. You have been suddenly introduced into a society so intoxicated with its own virtue that it dares to ignore its obligations to Christianity, and claims the right to improve the Gospel. There is then no resource left for the honest truth-seeker, who would obtain a true view of Christian holiness in its real dimensions, but to go back to the dawn of the Gospel, to travel into the night before its rise, and study the systems of men when least aided by the Christian revelation.

And here I feel that it would be but loss of time to dwell on the scenes which must meet the eye of the wanderer in search of holiness in non-Christian countries. A description of the condition of the people in such lands, of the impurity of their worship, of the horrible foulness of their, so-called, sacred writings, and of their general debased state of morality, would little affect the question as it concerns you. The Indian mythology you have, I am persuaded, long since rejected, and it would be to no purpose to present proof of its vileness. The loves of Krishna, the disgusting filthiness of Siva and Durga and Kali you have long since learned to pronounce unholy, although, alas, alas, how shall I say you have learned to hate that unholiness with which you permit your families—the wives and daughters whom every civilised nation labours to keep pure—to pollute their souls. I am sure, too, that you have ceased to associate holiness and asceticism together. The fakir or sunyasi, with his affected disregard of whatever society values or decency requires, may provoke your mirth or excite your

disgust, but cannot now inspire you with reverence. I greatly congratulate you on having shaken off for ever the vain superstitions even still so prevalent in this country, and I only remind you of them that you may not suppose the more congenial view of the human mind I am about to present is the whole truth.

Since, then, you happily agree with me in regarding these idolatrous systems as unholy we must have recourse to something nearer what you claim as pure, and although this be to present a one-sided picture of man in his natural state, I am well content to make it the only light which Christian holiness shall presently disperse with a glorious triumph. Without doubt the philosophy which has been brought into closest contact with the Gospel and at the same time has most influenced the world, the philosophy to which you are indebted for what power you have to resist the demands of Christianity, owes its chief origin to Plato. Whatever be the claims of Vyasa and Kapila, Gotama and Kanada upon us, as, being the founders of *Indian* philosophy, I am bound to select in preference to their's that system with which you have a nearer sympathy, and which of all pre-Christian philosophies most closely approaches the opinion you have chosen as better than the Gospel. In Plato's system we shall find exactly what we were in search of, the system which most commends itself to educated natives of India, honestly divested of all those Christian truths and that Christian spirit in which modern infidelity has not scrupled to array itself.

It would of course be impossible to exhibit to you in a few paragraphs anything like a complete digest of Plato's philosophy, nor do I pretend to the learning necessary to such an attempt. Happily it is not more impossible than unnecessary. A very brief survey of his conception will suffice to convince you that all its seeming beauty is the beauty of a dream of shadows, moving in speechless passionless rigour through the intricacies of complicated figures at the waving of the magician's wand,—a dream in which the hungry partake of viands which do not satisfy, and from which they wake to the torture of certain starvation aggravated by the images which have at once excited and mocked their fancy—and thus you will I trust receive into a heart humbled and grateful, the certain, living, and sufficing truths of Christian holiness. “Nothing can be more instructive,” remarks one from whom chiefly I shall borrow my sketch of Platonic holiness—“nothing can be more instructive (ought we to doubt that it was *purposely* provided?) than to watch the effects of human intelligence often struggling in the very same path which Revelation came afterwards to clear of all obstruction; when it coincides to see in it the unbribed testimony of natural reason to the supernatural communication,—when it differs or omits, to mark in

every separate instance the calm unboastful superiority of the message from heaven!" *

Sometime during the earlier part of the fourth century before Christ, in the gardens of Academus at Athens, a brilliant audience was wont to assemble around the person of the father of philosophy. Let us who desire to know what is true holiness and the way to attain it, mingle in the crowd and learn from the wisest of uninspired lips. But beware how in your eagerness you rashly attempt to enrol yourself a disciple; it is true you are sadly unholy, and true that you long for instruction which may fit you for better things, but before you dare to pass the portal read the inscription which jealously challenges all who approach, and judge whether you can claim access to the presence of the great teacher within. "Let no one unacquainted with geometry enter here." So runs the legend; and whatever doubt there be as to its actual existence, there is none whatever as to its correctly describing the essential condition required of enquirers after Platonic holiness. The basis of Plato's system is laid in the intellect. If any one lack sufficient intellectual power to master the elements of mathematics he is hopelessly excluded from any benefit in the lectures of the Academy. As educated natives of India I may suppose you have no need to pause long at the gateway,—except, indeed, it be to mourn over those many millions who must, you are well aware, be shut out for ages from the true path of holiness;—numbered, then, among the happy few we gain admittance, and as day by day we listen to the wonderful discussions of the great philosopher we gain by degrees a dim conception of the vast structure his own mind struggles to comprehend. Carefully confining our attention to the one study of holiness we gradually perceive the grand outlines of the system shape themselves into a form of which this may be taken as a popular view:—

Man's soul is made to contain not merely a consistent scheme of its own notions, but a direct apprehension of real and eternal laws beyond it, which real and eternal laws are the architypal "ideas" after which all things are fashioned; but they themselves are not sensible but intelligible, not objects of sense but of intellect. It is the part of reason excited to reflection by phenomena, or mere appearances, to rise to the conception of the "idea," and gaze more and more immediately upon its unveiled reality, thus having communion with truth itself. Platonic holiness is, then, to make the "idea" the subject of perpetual imitation; and the perfection of virtue Plato calls "assimilation to God." If you enquire how this contemplation is to be conducted, and what hope there is for the untaught many to whom a contemplative philosophy is an impossibility full of

* W. ARCHER BUTLER. *Lectures on ancient Philosophy.*

blank despair; if you venture to remind the sage, exulting in the matchless powers of his own unique mind, that the business of life must go on, the plough and the reaping hook, the forge and the loom, the sword and the code; if you disturb the serenity of calm philosophy with the shrieks of a cannibal festival, the hoarse din of battle, the discordant clang of gongs in idol temples, the drunken orgies of the lanes and gullies of a great city, or any other evidence of unbridled passion and wild excitement; if, with a deeper knowledge of the waywardness of human nature, you content yourself with pointing out the selfishness which in ambition and in meanness, in greed and profligacy, in cunning and deceit finds a home in the circles of enlightened respectability, and you crave some recognition of these in the system professedly intended for man,—Plato himself is appalled at the prospect. He looks coldly on the virtues of active life, he regards the domestic affections as hindrances and not helps to the soul's progress, he imagines for the great mass of mankind a system of metempsychosis, by which they shall pass through a variety of existences, as beasts and birds or men and women, till they are sufficiently purified—purified by the life of a beast!—for his philosophy, whence at length through the gate of a sublime contemplation they pass into the disembodied state where alone is bliss; and then, as if conscious that there is little comfort in this dreary prospect, he consoles himself and dazzles his audience with an imaginary republic in which, among other impossibilities necessary to perfection, philosophers must be kings or kings philosophers; thus, as a last resource, creating a world to suit his system since his system could not suit the world.

This is indeed a very meagre, but not, I believe, an otherwise unjust, sketch of the Platonic system of holiness. A further study of it would doubtless reveal more excellencies, but, as certainly, more defects, and enough has been said to illustrate the immediate point in hand. There are indeed two features of peculiar interest to you on which I have not touched:—Plato's doctrine as to the impossibility of teaching virtue, and indeed of communicating any true knowledge; this, he held, must be recovered out of the depths of the soul itself, and with better logic, if not greater honesty, than his modern admirers he does not hesitate to "denounce the invention of writing as a misfortune to man,—as the prolific parent of borrowed, sophistical, and illusory wisdom."* Into this I cannot now enter, as a discussion of the abuse of intuition would lead us too far from our subject, and Plato's own views as to the operation of God's Spirit upon the soul of man are not always interpreted in the same way by his expositors. Much more clear and more intimately connected with our subject is his doctrine of the connection between the

* W. ARCHER BUTLER. *Lectures on ancient Philosophy. Vol: II. p. 287.*

body and evil. It is necessary to his system that humanity should be mutilated in order to its perfection! or, not to ascribe to him a statement so self-destructive, that body in any form is not part of man: this I pass over because it is a topic which belongs to the last lecture of this series, and is of so high an importance that a reference to that lecture will, I am sure, be a safer course to pursue than to hazard a necessarily very insufficient notice of it here.

Before we listen to the voice of a greater than Plato, let me again remind you, that in considering his system you have reviewed the purest and most perfect of pre-Christian ages, that in selecting it we have exhausted the utmost resources of the human mind and reached the last limit of earthly morality, there is nothing higher to be found in all the pages of non-Christian religion or philosophy among the nations of mankind, civilised or barbarous. We have not even yielded to the strong temptation to seek our model rather among the Indian philosophies in our anxiety to climb the very highest earthly summit ere we should despair of an unaided entrance into heaven. Doubtless you have your intellectual Himalayas, but while there is a Chimborazo elsewhere we could not content ourselves with a less altitude. Yet you will admit that however lofty from beneath this highest of earthly eminences towered above the plain, and however golden its snowy summit seemed to glow from the distance, now that we have reached its utmost height we find the heavens still inaccessible as before, the stars as distant, the sun less warm, while we gasp in the thin unsubstantial air and freeze in the piercing cold of these uninhabitable realms.

Let us seek at Jerusalem what Athens has failed to afford us, and instead of the speculations of Socrates and the system of Plato take into our hands the Christian Scriptures. I say *Christian* because the system they unfold is one,—the system of Christ. Call Him, if you will, for the moment a Galilean peasant. We who have sought holiness in vain elsewhere cannot now afford to be over scrupulous. With the same honest earnestness which conducted us to world-worshipped Athens and her finest genius, we must push our way into the crowd of common people that beset the steps of the lowly Jesus, among the unfamed hills or nameless streets of Palestine. The book which Christ has given to the world is before us, and in its pages we may gather, if but our hearts refuse not instruction, the holiness of the Christian and how he attains it. Moses in the fifteenth century before Christ writes its first chapters, and John the Divine, after the lapse of a millenium and a half, lays down the pen, the revelation being complete. In the mean time some thirty writers have contributed each a little, none very much, to the work which is given to us at last on the authority of that Prophet whom we have seen teaching the people in Palestine. The

Bible, the whole Bible, is a Christian document then, as far as we are concerned, although, for convenience sake, we may at times find it useful to call part of it Jewish. The New Testament assumes the Old as the Old promises the New. It was needful to say this in order that we should not fail to preserve the due proportion of all those doctrines which commingled shape themselves into the perfect symmetry of Christian holiness.

Chief among these doctrines, apparent in every page of the many hundred chapters of Scripture, is the existence of a personal present God. Whether it be in the description of works peculiarly His own, or in the narrative of human life, in contemplative meditations, or vigorous exhortation to encounter everyday duty, God, arrayed in all the attributes of a perfect Being, in all the unquestioned supremacy of His Divine authority,—God is near. And with a firmness, which despises alike the conditions imposed by purely intellectual conceptions and the interpositions of sensible forms and shapes suggested by indolence and guilt, the faithful soul is confronted there and then immediately with God. There is no long discipline for the uncultured mind, no retirement of the wise from the stern duties of his day and generation, no fondly anticipated hour when a hated body shall be destroyed as if it alone were chargeable with the separation from Deity; but to the faithful soul of the common slave in his meanest offices as well as to the scribe deeply versed in all learning, to the wandering missionary in the excitement of his many perils as well as the saint in meditative exile, to the weary, to the hungry, to the sick, as well as to those whom no bodily infirmity oppresses, God, in the simplicity of His eternal majesty, is really, and distinctly, and immediately, present. “Servants obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with-eye service as men pleasers but in singleness of heart fearing God: and whatsoever ye do, do it heartily as to the Lord and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance; *for ye serve the Lord Christ.*”* “To me to live is *Christ*,”† says the Apostle rejoicing in his incessant labours. “Most gladly will I rather glory in my infirmities,” he says again, “that the *power of Christ* may rest upon me.”‡ And do not imagine because it is “God in Christ” which is thus revealed and beheld, that therefore it is God disguised. God does not assume a different appearance in Christ, but Christ manifests God as He is. He is not veiled but revealed in the Word, not bereft of His terrible majesty for the Son is “the brightness of the Father’s glory;” not in part or in figure for He is “the express image of the Father’s person.”§

* Col. iii, 22,—24.

† 2 Cor. xii, 9.

‡ Phil. i, 21.

§ Heb. i, 3.

But with all the nearness of God to man represented in the Bible, with all His intimacy in worldly events, the rigour of His spotless holiness is never once relaxed nor the terms of communion with Him forgotten. We are presented, as the great example, with the spectacle of a people degraded by slavery, unable, as it seems, to grasp a single abstract conception, conducted into the presence of God Himself, as His peculiar people; yet is there neither a clouding of the Deity nor any concession of the claims of His holiness. Just that manifestation of His presence is vouchsafed which their untaught minds could apprehend—the plagues of Egypt, the deliverance at the Red Sea, the voice of Sinai, while at the same time minute and multiplied regulations as to ceremony and purificatory rites are imposed, whence side by side with the vision of His presence a conception of God's holiness should fill their minds. There was localised worship, priests and altar, that they might not be pantheists; but there was no image nor form nor similitude lest they should become idolaters. But most notable of all those approaches which at once gave access to God and protected His presence, was the rite of sacrifice. Blood on the altar did not more clearly beckon the sinner to draw nigh than announced again and again the awful purity of that Divine holiness which could not indulge the smallest of sins. Day by day, morning and evening, the lamb was slain and the blood was sprinkled, and on many a high festival and on many a special exigence there was again the sacrifice, everywhere the testimony that some accursed thing lay between God and man which only death could take away, always the assurance that in giving sinful man access to Himself God did not, and would not, abate anything of His innate and eternal holiness. Further down in the strange history, but not without many an indication of what was coming, we behold the dread reality of all sacrifice, the very truth which all those figures constantly predicted. At once the type disappears like the moon in day-light, and henceforth we gaze on the reality—the sacrifice of JESUS CHRIST THE SON OF GOD, the solemn and most affecting revelation of the Divine holiness. God came near indeed to man, but God in all the awful purity of His nature, else it had not been He. And surely what we crave is God Himself, undiminished, undisguised, in the very fulness of His glorious Deity. And that He might come thus and that we might know Him thus, whether from some fitness in things or because we else would never hate sin as He hated it, at all events that He might in unimaginable love come to us and might, at the same time, put away sin, Jesus died, being made sin for us.* The complete repugnance of God's nature to sin, the utter impossibility of His ever permitting it in any thing dear to

* 2 Cor. v, 21.

Him, He made known in the death of His own Son, who, for this purpose—that He might reveal to us God as He is, took upon Himself our nature, accepted the burden of our guilt, and was obedient unto the death we deserved.

I hope none of you will suppose that I am attempting to explain all the meaning of that mystery of love—the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ. I have merely attempted to describe one view of it and have the more freely excluded any other because the subject has been treated generally in a previous lecture.

By reason of this wonderful revelation of God as He is, which you will remember was wholly wanting in the very best of non-Christian systems, another characteristic of the truth is developed, a second distinct feature of the Bible begins to engage our attention. The presence of God, with undiminished purity in the midst of sinful men, of necessity throws into the most flagrant contrast their sin; and this is the next idea that fills the pages of the Christian revelation. Sin is everywhere present, streaming up in palpable exhalations from every field of human nature, like pestilential vapours unseen by star-light but both seen and provoked by the blaze of an unclouded sun,—sin, not as in the legends of mythology adorned and excused by the high example of the gods, nor yet as conceived of in intellectual systems a weakness or an indolence to be lamented and disciplined, but in all its native hideousness as an abomination and a wickedness deserving and receiving the terrible vengeance of God,—sin, in the deliberate crimes of wicked men, sin, in the backslidings of the righteous, sin, judged and punished, sin, wept over and repented of, sin, put away for ever in the sacrifice of Christ. In strange proximity to the presence of God, revealed by the revelation of Him, sin in the Bible is detected and depicted with a stern fidelity elsewhere to be sought in vain. Do not suppose you understand anything of the Christian scheme of holiness till you have seen sin as only they see it who have first seen God. It is as confronted with Him—with Him as He is known in this revelation of Jesus Christ—that the soul becomes conscious of its sin, not merely as a deed once done, or a bad habit thoughtlessly contracted, but as its very nature. And side by side with this consciousness of sin comes a sense of its horrible guilt, of how deservedly it is hated by God and with what justice punished. Moreover, as the presence of the Divine purity glides on from chamber to chamber of the heart, the faithful soul perceives with an ever growing horrible amaze that this sin and guilt is hopelessly interwoven into its very being, and that no ingenuity, however honest, can fully detect and measure it. “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I the Lord search the heart.”*

* Jer. xvii, 9. 10.

Arrived at this point, the Christian system of holiness again presents us the exactly suitable truth, which is at the same time peculiarly its own. The revelation of God had brought with it, clear and distinct, the certainty of the judgement of all men—the heaven of the righteous and the hell of the unholy. But the Bible, having unmistakably announced these truths, does not seek to purify the soul with the allurements of the one and the dreadful threatenings of the other. Doubtless the awful powers of the world to come might be so wielded as to excite men even to insanity; and a contempt for things earthly with a certain appreciation for things heavenly might be easily produced by an unrestrained exhibition of the surpassing glories of heaven and the eternal despair of hell. The so-called Prophet of Arabia laboured by such means to secure the devotion of his followers. But the Christian system has a better method. Reward and punishment have their place in moral discipline; but where they are the only, or even the most prominent motives to exertion holiness is degraded into prudence and morality into selfishness. The truth and perfection of the Christian teaching does not expose us to this danger. Just when the soul in the light of God's holiness has perceived the hopelessness of deserving His favour or escaping His just wrath, God the Saviour meets him. This is the third grand feature in the Bible. God the Saviour is the glad tidings announced, and repeated, and re-echoed, celebrated in hymns, illustrated in narratives, typified in figures, expounded in treatises, the source of all life on earth, the joy of heaven as filling it with the bliss of gratitude. Nearer than hopes of heaven with its crowns of glory, nearer than fears of hell with its everlasting shame, is the love of the present personal Saviour with the words of pardon and the promises of peace on His lips. By the unanswerable argument of the cross, God at once demonstrates His love and convinces us that such love will secure our holiness. "I have sinned," is the cry of the soul in the presence of God's holiness; "the Lord also hath put away thy sin, thou shalt not die," is the answer of the Gospel,— "put it away" not merely by the remission of its punishment, death, but in that further sense which this remission seals and certifies to us. God, who so hated sin that the death of His own Son was the fit expression of His abhorrence of it, has now restored the soul to His favour; is there then any thing He will not do to purify that soul? "He that spared not His own Son, but gave Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things!"*

Now all things are ready and the faithful soul arises and is baptised into the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, that so he may be partaker in Christ's death and be born into a new life which is spiritual. For baptism means this—a partaking of the death

* Rom. viii, 32.

and resurrection of Jesus Christ, a new birth, (which is only another name for death and resurrection,) into a new life in which the Spirit of God is the animating principle. Sin has been atoned for and put away by the sacrifice of Christ, and the soul has united itself to Christ, accepting His salvation; there is therefore no longer any hindrance to the love of God accomplishing all its desire in that willing soul. The Spirit of the much loved Christ is welcomed in that heart which as a son is now obedient to the heavenly Father. The old nature is subdued by the energy of the Spirit, and by His agency the heart is filled with aspirations after heavenly things, with the means and desires for closer communion with God. Love to God in Christ is the ruling motive in the soul, and a consequent effort to be like Him the direction in which it acts. True it is that for the present the continued existence of the old nature produces many a weary struggle, but because the Spirit within is the Spirit of God, progress in holiness is certainly possible. And when at last the old nature perishes, the soul enters upon a state of perfect purity in which the love of God which brought it there shall keep it safe for ever. Of the perfection and bliss of that holiness who can speak aright? To us, still struggling with temptation upon earth, still saddened by sin, again and again grieving our spirits with its hated presence, freedom from sin, uninterrupted communion with God, may well seem joy enough to stay us from further speculation; but when we remember that this relief from the worst of all pain will be but the beginning of heavenly bliss, we are filled with delighted amaze to think what must be its continuance. "Assimilation to God," the wonderful words of Plato, shall indeed describe that eternal perfection, but in a sense beyond even his refined conception. The perfection of holiness does not mean to the Christian a vague contemplation of abstract truths, nor yet mere intellectual, although immediate, vision of the Divine realities, nor even an absorption into the Deity in which all personal identity and individual distinction would be for ever merged, but a personal existence in which character complete in all its parts and faculties shall still be maintained, and the man, body soul and spirit, saved from sin throughout his whole nature, shall with an exquisite enjoyment continually behold the beauty of God's holiness, and constantly, with every progress of his being, approach its Divine perfection:—"when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is."*

But to complete this sketch of Christian holiness, it is necessary to revert to one more feature of the system, no less emphatically insisted on in the Bible: and this chiefly because the frequent use of the word, system, may have led you to form an erroneous opinion, as

* John, iii, 2.

if Christian holiness were a theory or a doctrine, merely to be cherished in the mind not exhibited in the life. The practical results of these views, I have been endeavouring to describe, are constantly insisted on in Scripture. Holiness is a real purity of heart. It shrinks from all known sin, and grows continually in its perceptive powers, discriminating ever more and more accurately, and detecting sin in its countless disguises; so likewise does it become more sensitive, feeling more acutely every contact with sin, and enjoying more keenly all communion with God. It is then impossible for a holy man to be self-satisfied; rather, in fixed proportion to his advance will be his self-dissatisfaction, for each new enquiry will ever reveal new sins which had escaped the search of earlier, less cultivated, days, and the temptations of life as time revolves will bring new and untried faculties into contact with evil. Let none then suppose himself holy either because he has a clear conception of some system of holiness or because of self-complacency, and let none fondly persuade himself that it is possible to continue in sin and yet love God and be loved by God, for "without holiness no man shall see the Lord."*

Hitherto I have, in accordance with the plan laid down, resolutely refused to allow any modern system of religion to compare itself in our minds with Christianity, and I may have seemed to you, therefore, to have left your position unassailed because I have made no direct mention of those doctrines which are generally received among you. Permit me now to say in a very few words, how, as it seems to me, the question ought to affect you. Unaided reason seems to culminate in the Platonic speculations, we have now compared these with the Christian scheme of holiness, I do not think there are many or indeed any of you who will hesitate to say that the Christian system has greatly the advantage. An admission you may safely make both because it does not commit you necessarily to any decision on the truth of Christianity and because your own notions much more nearly coincide with the Bible teaching than with Plato's. If then you have condemned the purest of confessedly unaided human systems you are bound to remember the high pretensions of the Christian scheme, the fruitful source whence you have borrowed all the rest of your opinions. The modifications and additions by which you have improved on Plato's idea are plainly derived from the Christian Scriptures, and there is not the smallest reason for supposing that unaided by these writings any human mind would have discovered or elaborated them. The number and extent of these modifications and additions you can detect by a comparison of the works of the Athenian philosopher and the tracts and treatises of such writers as Newman

* Heb. xii, 14.

Parker and Emerson, or by a contrast of the cold, death-diffusing dialectics of the rejected Vedanta, and the glowing exhortations to active virtue, the unmistakable recognition of a personal God, and the bright promise of immortality which characterise the teaching of the Brahmo Somaj. You have selected from the Christian Scriptures at your own good pleasure whatever commended itself to your own minds, you have called it your own and built it into your system to strengthen and beautify with the semblance of life what must else have been uselessly feeble and a chilling death, without wisdom to direct or holiness to sanctify. Let me therefore earnestly warn you, while yet there is time, that each of those writers of the Christian Scriptures who were, in point of undisputed fact, the first to announce these holy doctrines, have again and again asserted that they learned them neither from man nor from their own hearts, but by revelation from God; and let me remind you of what you can readily verify for yourselves, that each of these amazing truths, or else the settled certainty of them, is inseparably connected by these writers with those other facts and revelations which you, on your own authority, have not scrupled to reject. Not even the subtlest ingenuity, nothing but the most determined abuse of the meaning of words, can separate the Scripture doctrine of holiness, to which you owe so much from the Scripture doctrines of the Divinity of Christ and His atonement for sin, which you nevertheless reject. You seize the effect and ignore the cause, or you accept the cause and persistently deny its only legitimate effect, and that in direct contradiction of the teacher who is the only, or the first, demonstrator of both. Do you not know that if there were any power or virtue in the Christian revelation it was certain to meet this treatment at the hands of men too proud to submit their minds to the dictation even of God? And do you not perceive that the only possible way, by which an honest heart could be protected from thus deceiving itself, has been adopted in the Scripture, in that the living doctrines, which so commend themselves to the mind that they easily seem its natural offspring, are inseparably connected with, and owe all their virtue to, facts and revelations which by their miraculous character never could be imagined other than superhuman truths, beyond all question objective and external? Why should you allow yourselves to be deceived, or blind yourselves to the certain consequences which are at hand? To have gone through the garden of God plucking the leaves and flowers and fruit of His own trees, and to have with matchless cunning bedecked therewith the barren branches of your own poor saplings that will not grow; to have produced the aspect, by such means, of genuine life and rich luxuriance may deceive for a moment the careless gaze of men; but when the fierce blaze of the sun in mid-heaven, the down-pour of long

continued rains, the strong wild breeze—the agencies by which natural fruit is ripened and strengthened and matured—when these after their manner make entrance into the garden, driving away the empty admiration of human approval, oh, what shame and everlasting contempt will the terrible exposure bring, when leaves are shrivelled up, flowers faded, and fruit decayed, and the harvest for ever past and the summer ended, and the fiat gone forth “Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up.”*

‘ Trial and temptation await you. A process is before you which shall curiously search out the secret places of your hearts, a marvellous adaptation of the evil without to the propensities within shall test your cherished integrity, and the assaults of Satan, now rapid and violent and again insidious and disguised, shall make close experiment of your fancied uprightness. True holiness beneath this discipline shall survive and grow strong, because it is the fruit of the atonement of the Son of God,—a living, everlasting demonstration of God’s love,—and its life is the Holy Spirit of God, the continual gift of that love to every one who by faith is partaker in that sacrifice. Thus does it abide for ever a real complete living sanctification,—its source within reach of the worst of sinners, the meanest of men, its end in a purity beyond the attainment of angels, being the very image of God’s own Son, conformity to whom is the highest destiny of man.

* Matth : xv, 13.

P R A Y E R.

A LECTURE TO EDUCATED NATIVES OF INDIA
DELIVERED IN SAINT PAUL'S CATHEDRAL, CALCUTTA,
ON FRIDAY NOVEMBER 24, 1865.

BY

THE REVEREND THOMAS SKELTON, M. A.,
SENIOR PROFESSOR OF BISHOP'S COLLEGE.

CALCUTTA:
MESSRS. R. C. LEPAGE & Co.
1865.

BISHOP'S COLLEGE PRESS.
MDCCCLXV.

PRAYER.



IN coming before you to speak of Prayer, I do not assume that I am addressing those who deny the duty of prayer or are altogether unaccustomed to pray. My hope is that I may be able to lay before you truer and clearer views on the subject than any you have yet held: and my object will be to exhort you to a more steady and consistent practice of prayer than any you may have yet adopted. But since the object of this course of Lectures is to produce a conviction of the truth of Christianity in those who are not yet convinced, the view of prayer that I shall have to lay before you, as a part of the scheme of the present course will be:—Prayer, as a means of acquiring conviction of the truth of Christianity. Of which when you are convinced, you will be in possession of the richest blessing that God has designed for men.

Now before we proceed, let us pause to notice that it is a matter of supreme interest about which our thoughts are to be now engaged, a matter in which the whole human race is intimately concerned, and which is especially a fit subject of meditation for religious enquirers.

The words pray and prayer, or whatever be their equivalents in the language of our daily conversation, are constantly on our lips. We sometimes use them in speaking of the requests that we have to make to one another. The begging woman prays for an alms with all the cries and gestures of supplication. The child in disgrace prays earnestly for the pardon of his fault and for restoration to his parent's affection. But a far commoner use of the word is to denote the mode of making requests to God, accompanied with acts of devotion, however erroneous or unworthy the form of devotion may be. When we see the Mahomedan going through his outward prostrations and listlessly reciting Arabic forms which convey no meaning to him, we are yet convinced that a feeling of piety in his own heart, or the pressure of a conventional usage framed by the piety of others, prompts him to the act, and we say of him that he is saying his prayers.

Now homage of this kind in one form or another is universal. When we look round among men in our own times, or backward into past ages, we see the idea of prayer universally recognized, and the habit every where prevailing. The Mahomedan prays. So also does the Hindu, when standing in the Ganges or Jumna or any

other sacred river, with hands uplifted towards the rising sun, he mutters his invocations. The untutored savage wherever he is found in the world has a sense of a Supreme Being, and employs some method of deprecating His wrath and begging His favour. From history we know that the heathen nations of antiquity, Babylonians, and Egyptians, Persians, Greeks, and Romans while believing in the existence of many Deities, honored them with worship, false indeed, (for it was for the most part idolatrous and accompanied with licentiousness or cruelty) yet according to their light they rendered homage, and sought favours by prayer. In the Jewish religion prayer was a recognized duty and a constant habit of religious persons, as a very slight knowledge of the Jewish Scriptures will show. Christians from the beginning of their history to the present time have been distinguished above all others by their doctrine and practice of prayer. The Brahmo Somaj enjoins meditation and prayer as a religious duty. A form of prayer, I am informed, is used in their social worship and a book of private prayers has been published. The notion and practice of prayers being thus universal, the subject of our lecture must be one of deep interest to religious enquirers.

The main divisions of our subject will be the *Nature*, the *Duty* and the *Expediency* of prayer.

I. Before we can understand the duty of performing an act, we must understand clearly what the act is, which it is our duty to perform. Our first inquiry, therefore, will be, what is prayer?

We must arrive at the notion gradually. Prayer in its simplest idea is supplication to God. Hence prayer implies belief in God. Moreover it is supplication to God for such things as we think He is able to give. Hence it assumes a shape and form dependent upon our belief in God, and our knowledge of the relationship that exists between God and men. Hence it is impossible that the different conceptions of God that have been entertained by successive ages and various races of men in the world can be all true, therefore it is impossible that the notions held by them concerning prayer can all be reasonable and right. If the Jupiter of the Greeks, and the Kâli or Krishna of the Hindus, be conceptions of God fearfully apart from the truth, then the worship of the Greeks and Hindus must be to the same degree deficient, and their views of prayer consequently obscure and imperfect. It becomes then a question what notion of prayer we should adopt as correct.

The notion of prayer depends upon our knowledge of God. Hence, if my arguments are based upon such conceptions of God as we hold in common, they will be received without hesitation or mistrust. Now the belief to which the present audience will readily grant their assent is, that God is Supreme, the great First Cause, the Governor of the world and of ourselves. Further that He is

God, and Benevolent, the Giver of all things desirable for men's happiness. Again that He is Just and Holy, that certain actions of men are pleasing, and others offensive in His sight; that He is as mighty to punish as to save, and that He frequently afflicts men with diseases and calamities which they of themselves are quite unable to ward off. The attributes of God and His relations towards men necessitate corresponding relations of men towards God. If God is Supreme, man is subject: it is therefore required of men that they do homage to God. If God is Good and Kind, as a Father towards his children, then men must instinctively approach God with feelings of confidence, and beg of Him in prayer those things which they think He is able to bestow, and render thanks for those things of which they feel sure He has been the Giver. Further if God is Holy and hates sin, and also Omniscient, so that no sin can be hid from Him, then it is man's duty in approaching God to acknowledge with contrition and sorrow all acts offensive to Him.

Hence prayer, which in its simplest sense is the offering of petitions, is never only this. True prayer consists of supplication, and of other cognate actions of the spirit, such as adoration, confession and thanksgiving. This is the idea of prayer of which we are about to speak and the practice of which we wish to recommend.

II. We come now to the question of the duty of prayer.

1. We have seen that the very mention of prayer implies its duty. We cannot speak of prayer otherwise than as an instinct of the conscience, arising out of man's relation to the Supreme Being. And the very fact that it is an instinct, and that the instinct is universal, constitutes, as we think, the prime argument for the duty of prayer.

We wish to lay great stress on this consideration, and to produce in each mind the conviction that prayer is a moral instinct in man's nature. But it may be said if it be an instinct, and the instinct be universal what need of argument to prove it to be a duty. To which we reply that when we say it is an instinct, we do not assert that it is irresistible, but on the contrary that it is weak; so that in many men, for long intervals of time, it may lie dormant, and in others become quite extinguished. Reflection is needed to recognize it as a true dictate of the conscience. Reflection will convince the reason that it is so. Then prayer will become a rational action and the knowledge, consciously entertained, will make the cultivation of prayer to be a moral duty.

Compassion is an affection implanted in every human breast, yet, by the withering influence of selfishness, the inner fount may, like a spring of water, become dried up. Or in other men, because it is not discerned to be an affection placed in them by God, it is

not cultivated from a sense of duty. In like manner the sense of prayer may, from contrary influences, languish and die, or it may not be recognized as a dictate of the conscience : in such a case we shall not have, as we might, an ever-present monitor to urge us to the practice of prayer.

Therefore we cannot say that arguments to prove the duty of what is in itself an instinct are out of place. In support of these remarks, I may quote the words of a profound thinker, whose opinion is respected by some at least of the philosophical enquirers of Calcutta. Mr. Mansel* speaking of proofs of the Being and Attributes of God thus remarks. "On the one hand it must be allowed, that it is not through reasoning that men obtain the first intimation of their relation to the Deity....Those who lay exclusive stress on the proof of the existence of God from the marks of design in the world, or from the necessity of supposing a first cause of all phenomena, overlook the fact that man learns to pray before he learns to reason, he feels within him the consciousness of a Supreme Being and the instinct of worship before he can argue from effects to causes, or estimate the traces of wisdom and benevolence scattered through the creation. But on the other hand arguments which would be insufficient to create the notion of a Supreme Being in a mind previously destitute of it, may have great force and value in enlarging or correcting a notion already existing and in justifying to the reason, the unreasoning convictions of the heart."

So we may say of prayer. Man has within him an instinct which urges him to pray before he can reason. But arguments which would be insufficient to create the feeling in a mind previously destitute of it, may have great force in justifying to the reason the unreasoning convictions of the heart.

To return then to our assertion, we say that prayer is an instinct of man's nature. The sense of the duty of prayer arises spontaneously out of the relations of man towards God.

Man is a dependent being, dependent on his fellow-men, dependent too, as he plainly sees, upon God. His dependence on his fellow-creatures obliges him in many instances to beg their help or to crave their pardon. The consciousness of dependence on God must prompt him to corresponding action towards Him. The true philosophy of religion is to be guided by analogy to other parts of the divine government. To use the words of the writer already quoted† "We have all as children felt the need of the supporting care of parents and guardians ; we have all in the gradual progress of education required instruction from the wisdom of teachers ; we have all offended against our neighbours and known the blessing of

forgiveness, or the penalty of unappeased anger. Our heavenly affections must in some measure take their source and their form from our earthly ones...the motives which prompt us, when we make known our wants and pour forth our supplications to an earthly parent are graciously permitted by our heavenly Father to be the type and symbol of those by which our intercourse with Him is to be regulated, with which He bids us 'come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in the time of need.—' "

~ The universality of the instinct is inferred from the fact that expiatory rites have prevailed among all nations, and that the religious feeling pervades all classes, ranks and ages within our own circle of observation. Listen to one who thus eloquently declares his experience :*— "Alone among beings here below man prays. Of his moral instincts there is none more natural, more universal, more irresistible than prayer. The child yields to it with a ready docility. The aged turns to it as to a refuge against decay and loneliness. Prayer mounts of itself to young lips that can scarce lisp the name of God, and to dying lips which have no longer the power to pronounce it. Among all people celebrated or obscure, civilized or barbarous, we meet at every step with the acts and forms of invocation. Wherever men are living, there under certain circumstances, at certain hours, under the dominion of certain emotions of the soul, the eyes are uplifted, the hands are joined, the knees bend, to implore or to render thanks, to adore or to appease."

To the reflecting mind the necessity and universality of prayer must be at once apparent. The knowledge of this fact constitutes to him who has consciously entertained it a proof that prayer is an instinct of Divine origin. He is now in possession of an argument to convince his reason. He will feel that necessity is laid upon him to pray : because it is a duty to God who gave him his constitution, and has implanted in all men the instinct of prayer.

2. We have asserted that prayer is reasonable : but our assertion will fail to produce that full conviction in your minds which I desire, unless an objection against prayer in the abstract be taken into consideration. It is one that has been perhaps universally felt and by many considered conclusive against the reasonableness of prayer. It may be put in this form :—

God's counsels are pre-determined and immutable. If therefore God has preordained anything that a man desires, it will happen even if he do not pray : and if God has ordained otherwise, his prayer will not so affect the Divine counsels that God should change His will and cause the thing to happen.

* Guizot, *L'Eglise et la Societ'e Chretienne*, quoted in the Appendix to Farrar's Bampton Lectures 1862.

Now in reply we notice, first, that the difficulty here stated is one of the kind called speculative, and should not affect us in the regulation of our conduct, because its solution is impossible to the finite intellect of man.

There are other such questions. One is the existence of evil in the world, either contrary to God's choice, or by his permission. The former alternative leads to the inference that God is not Almighty, a conclusion that our feelings instinctively reject. We must therefore accept the latter. But if we do, then another difficulty starts up. Why does God permit that which is destructive of men's happiness both in time and in eternity? Here is a question which the ablest philosophers and metaphysicians avow themselves unable to solve, and upon which even Christians, who believe in a Divine Revelation, admit that no light can be thrown. Another insoluble difficulty is the reconciliation of human action with Infinite Power. If a man be sick, why should he take medicine, or call a physician or make any efforts for his recovery. The means will or will not take effect according as God has ordained. Yet men universally *do* make use of means, impelled by the instinct of self-preservation, though they cannot answer the speculative difficulty. The impossibility of answering such questions consists in this that they lie in a region to which the intellect of man cannot soar. They depend on our knowledge of the counsels of the Infinite God. And it is allowed on all sides by sound metaphysicians that the finite mind cannot grasp the infinite, and must be content to leave questions of this kind unsolved. We will produce the authority of Mr. Mansel on this point also: * "Man," he says, "is content to practice where he is unable to speculate. He acts as one who must give account of his conduct. He prays believing that his prayer will be answered. He does not seek to reconcile this belief with any theory of the Infinite; for he does not know how the Infinite and the Finite can exist together. But he feels that his several duties rest upon the same basis: he knows that if human action is not incompatible with Infinite Power, neither is human supplication with Infinite Wisdom and Goodness."

Though I think I have already set aside the objection as affecting our conduct, by showing that it rests on the false notion that God's plans can be comprehended by man, while they cannot, yet I feel that many a candid inquirer may have been much troubled by this difficulty. I therefore wish to diminish its power as far as possible. I propose to throw out a few suggestions not indeed to make the whole matter demonstrably clear to the intellect, but to feel our way to the Divine mind as far as we are able. And this I

* *Limits of Religious Thought* p. 84.

shall do by aid of the light which Christian Theology can throw on the subject.

The question is concerning the efficacy of prayer, a doctrine felt by some and boldly asserted by others to be contrary to reason. It is said that prayer is useless, because all events are predetermined, and God, being Immutable, will not make alterations to meet the wishes of the suppliant.

One *hint* towards the comprehension of the difficulty of the question, if not of the question itself, is this:—that the means are predetermined as well as the end. God has ordained prayer as a means of obtaining blessings. He has designed that the prayers of men should precede the blessings which He bestows.

But in saying this we shall be met by the argument, that worldly men are in the enjoyment of blessings without prayer. Riches, robust health, freedom from care, are granted as abundantly to them as to others. To which we reply that this reasoning is erroneous. For, without faith, and prayer, which is the life of faith, these temporal gifts will in the end prove to be no blessings at all. This truth was clearly perceived by one who lived three thousand years ago and who in his religious contemplation thus addresses the Almighty; * “I was grieved at the wicked, I do also see the ungodly in such prosperity; For they are in no peril of death, but are lusty and strong. They come in no misfortune like other folk, neither are they plagued like other men.....Lo, these are the ungodly, these prosper in the world, and these have riches in possession: and I said, then have I cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency. All the day long have I been punished, and chastened every morning.....Then thought I to understand this, but it was too hard for me, until I went into the sanctuary of God, then understood I the end of these men; namely how Thou dost set them in slippery places, and castest them down to the ground. Oh how suddenly do they consume, perish, and come to a fearful end.”

But it will be urged, surely recovery from sickness, for instance, is a great blessing, even though it be not sent in answer to the sick man's prayer. But we reply that by the All-gracious God it is vouchsafed kindly, but by man's perversion the gift ceases to be a blessing.

An illustration of this principle is afforded in the account of one of the miracles of Jesus with which you may be familiar. The historian relates,† that, as Jesus entered a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers. They lifted up their voices, and said,

* Ps. LXXIII. A psalm of Asaph. vv. 3, 4, 5, 12, 13, 15,—18, cited from the Prayer-Book Version.

† Luke XVII. 12.

Jesus, Master, have mercy upon us. Jesus bade them to go and shew themselves unto the priests, to have their cure certified. They in faith went, as though the healing had already passed over them. And it came to pass that, as they went, they were cleansed. The ten had shown sufficient faith to be healed. In nine the religious sense was not strong enough to impel them to the duty of thanksgiving. One alone turned back and with loud voice glorified God, and fell down at Jesus' feet, giving him thanks. Jesus dismissed him, saying "Thy faith hath made thee whole." Our inference is drawn from the last speech of Jesus. We ask, Were not the other nine made whole? Clearly they were not, in the same sense that that one was. Yet the leprosy had departed from them all. Before outcasts from society, obliged to proclaim themselves to every passer by, Unclean! Unclean! they were now restored to the bosom of their families, and to the business and pleasures of life. In what respect had they not derived the benefits of being made whole? In this, that their cure had not been turned to their higher good, the welfare of their immortal souls, by an act of faith. The thankful leper only, in this highest sense, was made whole.

It will perhaps be rejoined, that thus you limit very narrowly the word 'blessing'; you mean by it such a benefit as tends directly or indirectly to the eternal good of the recipient. Be it so. If the subject be carefully examined, we shall be forced to accept such a limitation.* "Every creature of God is good and nothing to be refused," says St. Paul "if it be received with thanksgiving: *for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.*"

Another hint towards the comprehension of the efficacy of prayer is this:—*that true prayer can not be offered without resignation to the will of God.*

It may be objected to this explanation, that you remove the difficulty only one step further. If you pray only that the will of God may be done, why pray at all? It will be done whether we pray or not.

We reply that there is great advantage in this kind of prayer. It assimilates our will to God's. It makes the will of God pleasing to us. It makes us, therefore, recipients of blessings. Thus, a parent, watching by the bed of a sick child, prays to the Giver of life and death, that if it be His will, the child may be spared. Then if the child be not spared, he is sure that God has afflicted him in love, and desires his highest welfare. He is led to ask himself if there be any greater evil than the pain of bereavement, or any greater good than the happiness of parental love, and he is reminded of the far direr ruin of the soul, and of the far more joyful reward of the purified spirit in heaven.

* 1. Tim. IV. 5, 6.

The result of prayer such as this will be a gradual purification of heart and life, and a growth towards perfect holiness. And those who thus pray can join with an Apostle of Christ in saying, * "Whatsoever we ask we receive of Him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight." And again † "This is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything *according to His will*, He heareth us."

We have devoted a large share of our time in this lecture to the difficulty of reconciling with our reason a belief in the efficacy of prayer, because any misgiving on that point is a serious hindrance to the practice of prayer. Our conclusion is that the speculative difficulty is not one that should affect us in the regulation of our conduct, because it relates to the attributes and counsels of God which the finite mind can not hope to comprehend. Yet the light which Christian philosophy throws upon the subject warrants us to expect that full knowledge is reserved for a higher stage of intellectual and spiritual existence.

3. The fundamental argument that should convince us of the duty of prayer is, that the feeling which instigates us to it may be discerned by reflection to be an instinct of our conscience, a dictate of that voice, whose commands are the commands of God. Our duty may be perceived by other considerations also, and the argument which I shall now advance rests upon the example and precept of holy men.

The principle is a sound one, that that which is holy must be true. Now holy men and the most eminent religious teachers have recommended, both by their example and doctrine, the practice of prayer.

This assertion will be verified at once by our own observation, by written biographies, and by the history of religion.

Though the instinct of prayer is universal, our own experience tells us that, through mistake, it has become in many men blunted and powerless. The drunkard, the adulterer, and the profane, never come with their unrepented sins into the presence of God, for they dare not; they never make mention of prayer but with an oath or a jest. On the other hand, those who are free from gross vices, and lead comparatively moral lives, even if their motive be only the temporal benefit which ensues, (for moral rectitude has the promise of the life that now is,) will be worshippers of God according to their light and knowledge. If, moreover, they possess the higher qualities of benevolence, meekness and love; then, so far as their secret life can be ascertained, they will assuredly be found to hold frequent converse with God in prayer.

If we turn to biographies the same phenomenon will be observed.

* 1. Joh. III. 22.

† 1. Joh. V. 14.

Thomas Paine was an outlaw from his own country, a supporter of the French Revolution, an author whose writings have wrecked the faith of thousands, and, moreover, a man of intemperate habits. The details of the fortnight preceeding his death are recorded by an eye-witness.* He would call out during the paroxysms of distress without intermission 'O Lord help me! God help me! Jesus Christ help me! O Lord help me!' repeating the same expressions without variation, in a tone of voice that would alarm the house. These were the only prayers that he offered, mere cries of despair, wrung from him by his bodily pain.

With the life and last moments of the avowed Infidel, contrast those of the Christian Philosopher. John Locke was a faithful servant of the Government of his country, and the author of the celebrated "Essay concerning the Human Understanding." His integrity of character may be judged from the circumstance, that, when an asthmatic complaint obliged him to resign his employment, he wrote "That he could not in conscience hold a situation to which a considerable salary was attached without performing the duties of it."† Some four or five days previous to his death, we are assured by one who was with him when he died, and had lived in the same family for seven years before, that he particularly exhorted all about him to read the Scriptures: that he desired to be remembered by them at evening prayers: and being told that if he chose it, the whole family should be with him in his chamber, he answered, he should be very glad to have it so, if it would not give too much trouble."

The lives of all men who have done good in their generation will in like manner testify that they were men of prayer. We shall find that the habit of prayer is not distinctly avowed or laid open to public view; yet, on the contrary, it is not denied, but avowed when occasion requires, and is tacitly understood to be their constant practice, and is unmistakeably detected, like the violet which grows out of sight, by the fragrance which it diffuses into all their actions. Instances of holy men who have also been men of prayer might be multiplied indefinitely. But if *their* example is a guide to us in the path of duty, how much more imperative must be the example and doctrine of Jesus Christ, who, whatever be our faith concerning Him, must be separated off from all our ordinary men, as being One in whom eighteen centuries have been unable to point out any blemish, and whose religious teaching has been the standard and source of moral right from His own time to the present, and has exerted a mighty influence in the regeneration of the world.

* *The Closing Scene. First Series. p. 9.*

† *The Closing Scene. First Series. p. 19.*

I may safely count upon the acquiescence of my hearers in this estimate of the Founder of Christianity, for I am aware that that body of religious enquirers in Calcutta, who alone, besides Christians, are able to judge, though they reject the Christian Revelation, and rest their religious belief on their own intuitions, do yet avow that men's intuitional knowledge is progressive, and that its present stage of progress is due, in a very great degree, to the doctrine of Jesus Christ. Thus the *Indian Mirror*, quoted in last month's issue of *The Enquirer*, bears the following honest testimony to "what the few Apostles of Jesus have done," saying that its effect was "to bring entire nations and successive generations of perverse men to the Righteous God, and lay the foundation of an immense fabric of moral and social greatness."

What then do Jesus Christ and His Apostles teach us regarding prayer?

In the record of His teaching is preserved a model of prayer. As we approach God we are to rise to the comforting and ennobling conception that He is our Father. Our first petitions must have regard to God Himself, that men may hallow Him in their thoughts and do Him reverence: then to the spread of goodness in the world generally: then to ourselves. And on behalf of ourselves we may pray for temporal support, for forgiveness of sins, for preservation from evil. To the petition for forgiveness is appended the proviso that we have forgiven others. Since forgiveness implies love, the highest of moral qualities, it is evident that one condition of acceptable prayer is a cleansed heart..

We learn that prayer should be in secret and persevering. Jesus himself, we read, retired into desert places and spent nights in prayer. He has further directed that men should ask in His own name, that is, having faith in Him, because, apparently, such faith is evidence of a mind entirely reconciled to the will of God. Lastly, we are taught to seek aid from the Holy Ghost that we may be able to pray; for often a man feels his struggling soul tied down to earth. In such a case, an Apostle says, "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." *

A brief summary of the example and doctrine of Jesus Christ and His Apostles has been presented. And I say, because the example of holy men is universally admitted to be a guide in the regulation of conduct: and because you regard Jesus Christ as, in a way, distinct from and superior to all others who by their lives and doctrine have a claim upon your reverence, and that He and His Apostles have taught us to pray: therefore you have in their ex-

* Rom. viii 26.

ample and command another argument for the duty of prayer; and for praying in the manner they taught.

The life of faith and prayer is not attractive to the flesh and natural mind. Very severe effort is required to renounce convivialty, to shorten one's moments of business or pleasure, and retire, as Christ directed, into one's closet and shut to the door and pray to the Father who seeth in secret. Nothing can overcome the natural distaste for such a practice but the stern command of duty. 'I wish therefore, my hearers first of all, to impress themselves with the sense of this duty. As you would fulfil your obligations to God, as you value your immortal souls, you must cultivate the habit of prayer. Though the world scoff, though thousands neglect the duty, this is no argument to you who have a sense, or an intuition, if you please to call it so, that God has bidden you to pray.

III. Leaving now the duty, let us turn to the *expediency*, of prayer.

God would not implant in man a sense of the duty of any act which would not ultimately prove advantageous to him. The sense of duty is the paramount motive which will bear a man on, when, for a time, ease and present advantages would seduce him another way. It is, however, a great support to a man in the conscientious pursuit of a duty, if advantages, either present or future, can be pointed out as sure to result from it. Accordingly God has graciously designed that some of the beneficial effects of prayer should be matters of experience, or plainly appreciable by the reflecting mind.

The question of the efficacy of prayer has already been discussed as a difficulty presenting itself to the intellect, and we decided that we cannot tell how God answers the prayers that men offer to Him in their wants and emergencies, yet that He has plainly commanded them to pray: and that prayer offered in resignation to God's will must have a very marked effect on the character of the suppliant himself.

On the ground of this its subjective effect, then, we assert the expediency of prayer; and we desire now to speak somewhat more fully of the consolatory and the sanctifying effects of prayer.

1. Prayer alleviates sorrow.

Nor does this statement confine the use of prayer to special seasons of unusual sorrow or trial. Man is born to trouble, it is said, as the sparks fly upwards. His normal condition is to be harassed with some care great or small. If he be not suffering actual bodily pain or hard privation, he is engaged in some pursuits which often plunge him in a sea of care or vexation. If a man's minor trials, as well as the heavier drive him to prayer, he will find that they will be lightened in a great measure, or altogether removed. "Be careful for nothing" is the Christian precept, "but in everything, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be

made known unto God." * You are to make known your requests. You are to come with your troubles into the presence of God and hold communion with Him. What will be the manifest effect? Clearly some of your desires and ambitions will appear to be wrong, mixed up, in some way, with an alloy of evil. Those you must modify. Other trials, it will appear, must be patiently endured. In the light of God's presence they will be seen in a different aspect; as divinely-ordained means for promoting your higher good, or for leading you to check some evil habit, and grow in some needful virtue. Prayer will reveal the great truth that "all things," all circumstances, by which men find themselves surrounded, "work together for good to them who are the called according to God's purpose," called, that is, to a spiritual life here, and to a heavenly inheritance hereafter.

2. We are led, thus, to notice, not only the consolatory, but the sanctifying effect of prayer.

The results of prayer of which we have been speaking, the removal of the sting of sorrows, cheerfulness of disposition, enjoyment of the things of life, are benefits which can be appreciated by all, and might induce even the worldly man to submit to the self-restraint of a life of prayer. But the results of which we are now about to speak, the conversion of a man's soul to God, his growth in Divine knowledge, the regulation of his heart and life, are inducements only to those that love God and seek conformity to His will. Such we must regard all here present, and we remind you that the results you desire are among the undoubted effects of prayer.

An illustration will show the sanctifying tendency of prayer.

The Apostle Peter, in his letter to the Christian converts under his charge, is dwelling on the duties of husbands towards their wives. He exhorts them to give honour unto the wife as unto the weaker vessel, that is, to treat her with that tenderness and affection which the relationship requires, and adds this inducement "that your prayers be not hindered."† Clearly then we may deduce that the non-fulfilment by a husband of his duty to his wife, and therefore also the non-performance by any person of the duties incumbent upon him in all his various relations to others, is a hindrance to prayer.

Therefore the praying man does not attempt to offer petitions until he has done his duty to his neighbour, and for any omissions of duty has made all the amends in his power. Thus the condition attached to the petition for the forgiveness of our sins is that we have forgiven those that have wronged us. Hence too the soundness of that precept:—‡ "If thou bring thy gift of homage to the

* Phil. iv. 6.

† 1. Pet. iii. 7.

‡ Mat. v. 23, 24.

altar of thy heart, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way : first be reconciled to thy brother, and then go, and offer thy gift." Since forgiveness of brethren is characteristic of that love which is the greatest attainment of holiness, the nearest approach to the likeness of God, it is clear that, if prayer promotes *that*, it will promote every other excellence of character.

As a branch of my present subject, I must now dwell upon the special topic of this lecture. In the prospectus of the plan of the six lectures delivered in this Cathedral, the task assigned to me was to speak of "the use of prayer in seeking to attain to the knowledge of certain sacred truths, and to frame the life accordingly." And the sacred truths alluded to are "the redemption of the world and the sanctification of the Church" by the operation of "the Second and Third Persons in the Godhead." Has not my treatment of the subject of prayer naturally led me to the consideration of this particular branch of it? Have I not already asserted generally that prayer is a means of attaining to the knowledge of divine truths?

In my illustration of the effect of prayer on the heart of man, I dwelt only on its incompatibility with malice, and its natural tendency to bring about reconciliation and love : which love was the highest attribute of God, and the highest attainment of holiness possible to man. I thus treated of the use of prayer for the sanctification of men. But between the means and the highest effect, there are intermediate means. The sanctification is progressive. Which of us does not know that if he kneels down to commune with God in prayer, not a single act of uncharitableness to a neighbour, but numerous sins and impurities rise up before his face. Not only some unkindness to a brother or a sister, but a thousand other defilements must be atoned for. The more narrowly he looks into his own heart the more glaring and innumerable appear his sins of omission and commission. He will say * "the good that I would, I do not : but the evil that I would not, that I do..... . I delight in the law of God after the inward man ; But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." If he be an honest and truly God-fearing man, the cry of his soul will be, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this dead body," through whose medium evil desires exert their power? There *is* a redeemer. The Christian preacher declares that he is Jesus Christ. Multitudes have accepted his message, not indeed as an intuitional truth, but as a revelation from

* Rom. vii. 19, 22-24.

heaven; not as a belief which they could have discovered for themselves, but one, which when revealed, they find to be adapted to their inmost wants. Multitudes, therefore, who with St. Paul have lamented their captivity, and bewailed the subjugation of their better selves to the law of sin in their members, have in the prospect of redemption commenced in this life, and to be consummated hereafter, exclaimed with the same Apostle "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

The subject of redemption was treated fully in the third lecture of this series, I am therefore relieved from the duty of producing the reasons and arguments for considering it a doctrine of true theology. I believe that Jesus Christ is the Redeemer from the captivity which you in common with all men must feel. I believe, though it be beyond my full comprehension, that God sent His Son into the world, and in mercy allows the merits of His death on the cross to be an expiation for our sins; that by faith in those merits, we are reconciled to God; further that we are rendered submissive and obedient to God by faith in Jesus Christ, and that thus dying with Him by the mortification of all evil desires, we are raised with Him, through the operation of the Holy Spirit, to newness of life.

The existence, and distinct personality, and operation of the Holy Spirit was the subject of the fourth lecture. I may be excused, therefore, from bringing forward the proofs of this doctrine also. It is a less difficult one to accept than the former. If Jesus Christ the Son of God rose again, and ascended into heaven, what more natural than that He should send the invisible Holy Spirit to compensate for the renewal of His visible presence? And what more reasonable, if He spoke of that Holy Spirit, as a separate Agent in the Godhead, than that we should accept the announcement? A belief in His personal existence and His operation in our hearts is a very comforting belief, and a blessed aid to holiness. Faith in Jesus Christ as our Redeemer, faith in the Holy Ghost as our Sanctifier—such are the intermediate means of sanctification, such is God's appointed scheme for aiding men to heavenliness of character, and exalting them to union with Himself.

Prayer is a means of growing in the conviction of these, as of all other, divine truths. We have before said that when men, weighed down with anxiety, and conscious of their dependence upon God, lift up their hearts to him in prayer, then upon them is bestowed energy for surmounting some of their troubles, resignation and endurance with regard to others: and besides this, their thoughts are drawn up to God and they are reminded of the higher life of their soul, for which they are to be fitted by framing their heart and life according to His will. The last named process requires belief in His Son and in the Holy Spirit. Thus it is that the promise to them who make

known their requests by prayer is, that “the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep their hearts *through Christ Jesus*.”* Thus it is that† “whatsoever we ask *in the name of Jesus Christ* we receive.” Thus it is that after the command, ‡“Ask, and it shall be given you: seek, and ye shall find: knock, and it shall be opened to you,” it is added, “Your heavenly Father shall give the *Holy Spirit* to them that ask Him:” as though the ultimate and grand result of prayer was the indwelling and aid of the Holy Spirit. The knowledge of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit is indispensable to sanctification: the means that men can employ for acquiring this knowledge is prayer.

The promises I have to hold out to you, then, are peace in the belief of your redemption by Jesus Christ, growth in holiness by the sanctifying operation of the Holy Spirit. These are no inducements to the worldly man. By him they would be despised and trodden under foot. I am speaking to those who, by their presence here, testify that they aspire after truth and holiness. I cannot doubt that many of you have an earnest wish to believe in Jesus Christ, and to become holier men by the blessed aid of God’s Spirit. Omit not, then, the practice of prayer. It is reasonable. It was the practice of all the saints on earth who were before you. It is the sure road to the results you desire. The proud world will scorn. The devil will endeavour to entangle you in some great sin. The flesh will be constantly crying out, let us eat, drink and take our fill of pleasure. Be not overcome by any of these temptations. Appoint for yourselves, regular seasons of prayer. Pray to your Father which seeth in secret: and your Father which seeth in secret Himself shall reward you openly.”

On Champions blest, in Jesus’ name,
 Short be your strife, your triumph full,
 Till every heart have caught your flame,
 And lightened of the world’s misrule,
 Ye soar those elder saints to meet,
 Gather’d long since at Jesus’ feet,
 No world of passion to destroy,
 § Your prayers and struggles o’er, your task all praise and joy.

Phil. iv. 7. + John, xiv. 13. ‡ Luke, xi. 9, 13.

§ *The Christian Year.* All Saint’s Day.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY.

A LECTURE TO EDUCATED NATIVES OF INDIA

DELIVERED IN SAINT PAUL'S CATHEDRAL, CALCUTTA,

ON FRIDAY DECEMBER 1, 1865.

BY

THE REV S. DYSON.

CALCUTTA:

MESSRS. R. C. LEPAGE & Co.

1866.

BISHOP'S COLLEGE PRESS.

MDCCCLXVI.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY.



THE doctrines of Christianity, as being opposed to the common principles of mankind, and yet, when the offence of their novelty has been overcome, extorting from men a confession of their sublimity and spirituality, have been often appealed to as a strong evidence of their Divine origin. Among these evidential peculiarities, the doctrine of the resurrection of the body has not, as far as I know, been ever included; but there is no reason apparent on the surface, why it should not have been. The doctrine is an integral part of the Christian revelation of a future state, and has never been promulgated by any other religion, or been included within the tenets of the so-called Natural Religion. It scarcely needs *familiarity* with the character and results of the speculative enquiries of the ancient philosophers, or the common notions of the heathen vulgar, to be in a condition to allow that the future reunion of the body and the soul was regarded as visionary and impossible. Nor, when we regard the facts presented to our perceptions, can we wonder. The perishable materials out of which our earthly tenement is constructed, its slow and sure dissolution and dispersion after death into the clods of earth, are phenomena amply sufficient to stagger the faith of all who trust only in the light of nature. Strange, however, as the doctrine may seem, the fact of its being a constituent portion of the faith which Jesus Christ proclaimed, cannot be questioned. It is the obvious teaching of our records, and has been accepted as such from the first, by all who have embraced Christianity, and by all who have rejected it. It becomes then a question deserving serious consideration at the hands of those who invariably speak in terms of respect of Jesus of Nazareth as wise and good, and as most remote from the visionary enthusiast, how he of all men should, in tones of calm deliberation, have enunciated this doctrine. "The hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth; they that have done good to the resurrection of life and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation."*

The doctrine, moreover, is not one that is only externally con-

* John. v. 28, 29.

nected with the system, or that can be lopped off, leaving the scheme standing in due proportion and symmetry. It is a cardinal, a central feature, intimately interwoven into the whole plan, being in Christ's own resurrection, the foundation stone on which the superstructure is erected, and in the final deliverance of believers, the crowning stone of his redemptive intention. The connexion between Christ's resurrection and that of mankind is represented as necessary, like that between cause and effect. The disproof of one is the disproof of the other. If the general resurrection be a fiction and an impossibility, then Jesus' own resurrection must be the same, nay Christianity altogether must be false and delusive. "If there be no resurrection of the dead, then is not Christ risen; and if Christ be not risen then is our preaching vain and your faith is also vain. Yea and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ; whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not."*

Undoubtedly, of all the questions that meet us in our journey through life, the most interesting and the most momentous is that of our future existence. It can be no wonder then, that this absorbing question has been a subject of keen speculation from the first dawn of enquiry to the present day. In estimating, therefore, the character and value of the Christian Revelation on this topic, it will be of essential help to measure the interval which intervenes between that revelation and the achievements of unaided reason. In order to appreciate this difference, it is not needful for us to discuss the difficult question of the limits of man's natural capacities, his native ability or inability to solve this problem. It will answer all practical purposes if we briefly indicate what *has* been accomplished by human reason, without pretending to determine what man *can* accomplish. Looking at the question from an historical point of view, surveying the results of philosophical enquiry previous to the diffusion of Christianity, we must, I think, allow that a *demonstration* of the problem by man's rational faculties, with such helps as Creation and Providence afford, was not given. The enormous advances made by physical science within the last three centuries have not undeniably yielded any *new kind* of argument towards the proof of future life, and as all the conditions and circumstances at the command of deistic philosophers now, (if we could shut out the general belief grounded on the authoritative statements of Scripture,) were present to the ancient sages, and nothing moreover, wanting as regards mental character, the fact of their failure to attain to a rational *conviction* of the truth is most significant and instructive.

It is not pretended that the expectation of a future life did not

* 1. Cor. xv. 13—15.

exist amongst the people of the ancient world. The prevalence of the belief is abundantly testified by the extant mythologies. But it must also be admitted that the belief rested on no solid basis, had no appreciable influence upon the conduct in seasons of trial, ~~could~~ present no proof in its support, and at the first brunt of enquiry crumbled away.

Philosophers might depict, not very successfully, in poetical language, a future state of purely *spiritual* enjoyment, but the vulgar, though they disbelieved the resurrection of the *body*, could form no notion of an afterexistence but such as implied *bodily* pains and pleasures. They held that the shape or the shade of the body would survive. And the reason of this is not far to seek. They expected a future existence because they expected a future retribution, and a retribution upon a mutilated humanity was scarcely intelligible. It may please some to stigmatize these views as inconsistent and grovelling, but till the compatibility of a belief in an immortal soul only with an expectation of a future judgment and retribution is clearly shewn to satisfy our natural instincts of equity, our sympathies, we confess, go out rather to the populace than to the philosophers.

However, this vague notion based on common tradition was soon overrun with superstitions, and when the spirit of enquiry moved upon the face of the heathen world, both faith and superstition were alike indiscriminately rejected.

And now it was attempted to construct on a *rational* basis that faith which hitherto had rested on no such support; a future life was now to be proved, not blindly accepted. But experience soon demonstrated that rational investigation in this field was competent to disintegrate and demolish the popular faith, not rebuild and establish it.

It is far from my purpose to undervalue the earnest strugglings of those great and good men of antiquity,—Socrates as recorded by his disciple Plato, amongst the Greeks, and Cicero, long after, amongst the Romans,—to strike out some sparks of truth from amidst the dense darkness which invested them. But a survey of the facts will convince a candid enquirer that their speculations never amounted to more than a *surmise* of life, a hope that the mind *might* survive death, not a conviction that it *would*. The doctrine never was admitted by the philosophers themselves, and, a fact more conclusive still, those who did argue in its favour never really succeeded in certifying *themselves* of its truth. Plato, than whom no one has argued more ingeniously and conclusively on this point, states “that even the best reasoning on this subject is but a crazy raft scarce likely to survive the storms to which it will be exposed in life’s troublous voyage.” And in another place he says that “nothing short of a Divine Revelation could certify us of the future

condition of the soul.”* And I see no reason why we may not adduce the unexceptionable testimony of the historian (Gibbon on this subject, “the most sublime efforts of philosophy,” he says, “can extend no farther than feebly to point out the desire, or at most the probability for a future state.”† And no doubt, had the doctrine been demonstrated, the conviction *must inevitably* have become universal. What educated man now believes in the Ptolemaic, and disbelieves the Copernican theory of the solar system? The force of demonstrated truth is irresistible.

The reasonings adduced comprise all those arguments upon which stress is now laid, and I am not aware that more can be said in favour of the belief than has been said already by Plato and his successors. The immateriality of the soul, the disproportionateness of its powers and capacities to the brevity of the body's duration, its uncompounded nature as distinct from the composite character of its tenement, its occasional vigour and activity when the body is wasting away in mortal disease;—these and similar instructive facts were perceived and appreciated, and so also were other facts, adverse to the belief, and to them irreconcilable with it. For, after all, it cannot be denied, conjectures are not proofs, expectations are not certainties, and analogies are not demonstrations.

The hope of a state of retribution, in which happiness and misery were to be dealt out to a man according to his conduct in this life, would have indeed afforded a probable argument in favour of the truth they were in quest of;—(if not the soul's immortality, yet at least its future existence, would be a probable belief,)—but they could not surmount the barriers of death; the sight of the dissolution of the body arrested all further search in that direction. The resurrection of the body is far beyond the bounds of natural religion, and judgment upon *part* only of the nature that survived, did not appear equitable. And again, if they were to disbelieve in the annihilation of the constituent particles of the body, and also to believe in their re-employment in the formation of other bodies, they could not but perceive,‡ that the same reasoning was applicable to the spirit also, whether it be simple or compounded. If there can be no fresh particles of matter, neither can there be fresh particles of spirit. If the same *material* atoms are employed again and again in the construction of new bodies, so also must the same *spiritual* atoms be employed again and again in the formation of new spirits to inhabit them. Therefore scouting the notion of future retri-

* Plat. *Phed.* p. 3, and *Timæ* p. 72, quoted in Humphry's *Hulsean Lectures*. 1849.

† Gibbon's “*Decline and Fall*” ch. XV.

‡ Which, as appears from what is written p. 65. *Brahmo Dhormo*, the leaders of the Brahmo Somaj do not.

bution as absurd or impossible, and yet, striving to grasp the doctrine of the soul's immortality, they were driven to an idea, which, while it saved indeed the soul's future existence, was utterly subversive of its distinct personal nature, viz.; that "the soul of each man is a portion of that spirit which pervades the Universe, to which it is reunited at death, and becomes again an undistinguishable part of the great whole; just as the body is resolved into the general mass of matter. So that their immortality, or rather eternity of the soul, was anterior as well as posterior; as it was to have no end, so it had no beginning; and the boasted continuance of existence, consists in returning to the *state in which we were before birth*; which, every one must perceive, is the same thing, virtually, with annihilation."*

Such then being the dubious support which boasting reason gave to this doctrine, we can scarcely be surprised that its practical influence upon the life and conduct gradually vanished. Unconnected with religion, bereft of its essence, viz., future retribution, the doctrine of an afterlife became simply a matter of opinion. Having no potency as a motive, no influence as a consolation, it was soon regarded as an interesting subject of philosophic speculation, and a fruitful theme for school-boy declamation.

In turning from these chill and dreary regions to the light and warmth of the Gospel, it is instructive to remark how widely different is the mode in which this topic is handled by the wisest and best philosophers from that adopted by Jesus of Nazareth. To them, the subject was distant and indistinct; they seemed to be groping for the truth dimly looming out of the darkness, and which, when they had seized, they could not retain; it was ever and anon slipping from their grasp. The language of Jesus is that of a master, plain, unhesitating, uniform and authoritative, "we speak that we do know." There is no attempt by argument of probability to commend the doctrine to the consideration of his hearers, no reasons based upon the nature of the soul, its powers and capacities. All those philosophic arguments of unassisted reason whatever their character and whencesoever derived, whatever their cogency and whatever their weakness, are left simply as they were. Whether the immortality of the soul can be demonstrated or not is doubtless an interesting enquiry, but it is a question with which Christianity is in no way concerned. In the Gospel the doctrine of a Future Life is not revealed as a product of man's reason, but as a light brought down from Heaven to be accepted simply because Jesus Christ, God Incarnate, promulgated it. The authority which Jesus Christ claimed for himself is substantiated by a mass of proof which I

* Whately's *Essays on some of the Peculiarities of the Christian religion* p. 41.

venture to assert, is impregnable. The credentials he exhibited, the doctrines he enunciated, the tone and manner he adopted, are all in harmony, and can, I am convinced, only be explained by an acceptance of the truth of his claims. And it is because Jesus, who, by many invincible proofs, especially by that grandest, the seal and crown of all the evidence, his own resurrection, established his claim to be obeyed, has clearly and unequivocally declared the truth of a future life, that Christians believe it. Arguments drawn from reason and the analogies of nature may be accepted for what they are worth, as coincident and corroborative, but the conviction of the reality of an after life is grounded exclusively in the authoritative and clear statements of Scripture.

But it is important that we should understand what this declaration is, and how far it diverges from, and transcends, the conclusion unaided reason strove to reach. The immortality of the soul was the very utmost that philosophy endeavoured, and vainly endeavoured, to grasp. Christ reveals *our* immortality and *our* everlasting life. It is the after existence of man, and not the continuance of the spiritual element in man, which is the statement of the Bible. The immortality of the soul may be a most precious and important truth, but the doctrine as such has no connection with the scope and sphere of the Christian Dispensation. This truth, though not *explicitly* revealed, is of course necessarily implied and involved in the announcement of the complete truth. And the reason of this doctrine occupying such a subordinate position in the Revelation is obvious. Christianity is a Divine interposition on behalf of *man*, its declarations of forgiveness, peace, and eternal happiness are addressed to *man* as *man*; and not merely to the rational and thinking principle. And therefore it is the restoration of the body, and its reunion with the soul, which is the distinct teaching of Christianity with regard to our future existence.

But, looking deeper into the truth, to state that Jesus proclaimed his doctrine by virtue of his divine authority, or to affirm that Jesus declared himself to be the Author of the resurrection, does not satisfy the terms used in Scripture. Jesus's words are "*I am the Resurrection and the Life.*" Our resurrection and our life are in some mysterious way wrapped up in, stand or fall with, his life and resurrection. Now, the investigation of this important truth brings us to the very centre and foundation of the Christian Faith, *viz.*, the Incarnation of Christ.

We are not now attempting to explicate the method of this mystery. The union of the finite and infinite, the conjunction of the Godhead and Manhood in the Person of Jesus Christ, however inscrutable to man's understanding as to its *mode*, is, like the union of the body and soul in human nature, receivable enough as a *fact*. And it is the *fact* as stated in the Christian records and substan-

tiated as it is by unanswered testimony, of which we are now speaking. Human nature having sinned in its first parent and representative, and thus fallen under the doom of death, God the Son assumed mysteriously, yet actually, human nature into his own Divine Person, and, in this two-fold nature and one personality, becoming the second head and representative of the race, lived in this world, obeyed God's law, suffered, died and rose again, and, ascending to heaven, will return at the consummation of all things and the completion of his kingdom, to the final judgment. Now Christ suffered, died, and rose again, not as an isolated individual only, but as gathering up into himself the human family,—not as a human person only, but as human nature. As human nature died in Adam, so shall human nature revive in Christ. Through the whole experience of the God-Man, it was human nature that was crucified, buried, and rose to life. All who partake of this nature, as they are partakers of his redemption, so are they sharers in his resurrection, and are amenable to his judgment. Jesus Christ is thus a centre of union to the whole human family. There is a link which binds Jesus Christ to every individual of the human race. By virtue of his assumption of humanity, all men are interested in, and affected by, his life and acts. "The word was made flesh," and being bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh, what he achieved in his own person, he achieved in our nature also; His resurrection then is the resurrection of human nature;—is the resurrection of all men. He, the ideal man, has traversed the circle of human obligations and conditions. As in his life on earth, he is our pattern and guide, so in his exaltation to eternal glory, he is our exemplar and forerunner.

Our ultimate redemption then, implying necessarily the resurrection of the body, is involved in the resurrection of Christ's body; and the resurrection of Christ's body with its retrospective and prospective effects accomplishes our redemption, and secures our final judgment.

Whether it were possible for Christ, having abandoned the body to the dissolution of the grave, to have effected the deliverance of the soul only or not;—whether the soul stript of the body is capable of heavenly felicity or not;—whether the belief in the future existence of the soul, apart from that of the body, is of any value or not;—these are questions we have no data for discussing, and which we are not concerned to affirm or deny. Those who read with a candid mind the history of philosophic speculation cannot be very sanguine. It is sufficient here to state that such speculations have no immediate connection with the object of the Christian dispensation. We are soul and body upon earth, we shall be soul and body, *i. e.*, men, in the world to come. And this we believe, because human nature, body and soul, is eternally conjoined with God, in the person of Jesus Christ. The incarnation of Christ is the fundamental mystery

in which all the sublime truths of Christianity are rooted, and from which they take their spring. It was not a human soul only, that was taken into the Godhead, but body and soul; it was not the human soul only, whose redemption was bought, but body and soul; and it is not the human soul only, whose final state shall be determined at the great day of account, but body and soul. Everything involved in the relation which man now sustains to the Father of our spirits, and in the position which man will take after death hinges upon the fact whether Christ did or did not accomplish the work he came to accomplish. And the crowning, *sealing*, proof of his having accomplished this work is, his own resurrection from the dead.

Let us then understand the position taken by the Bible with reference to this doctrine. If human nature be not redeemed by Christ, there is no redemption of the spirit, and if Christ's body did not rise, there is no immortality of soul. There are two words indicative of all momentous and solemn facts, too often alas! lost sight of by the men of this generation, constituting the two foci around which the circle of the Christian economy revolves, for the truth of which our hearts and our flesh cry out as for the living God, and for the truth of which, moreover, the historical reality of Christ's death and resurrection is the only guarantee, *viz.*, Redemption and Retribution.

Disallow the resurrection of the body, and these both slip from our grasp. The soul is not the man. Human nature is not spirit only. Now it is sinning humanity that is redeemed by Christ, and it is sinning humanity that shall be raised by Christ, and it is sinning humanity that shall be judged by Christ. Take away Christ's resurrection, and you abolish redemption, and immortality, and final retribution. Admit Christ's resurrection, and these grand truths are demonstrated. All stand and fall together.

Now we cannot conceal from ourselves that these results narrow the question, and I am anxious that you should perceive that the discussion is now brought to a clear, sharply defined issue: Since upon the resurrection, or non-resurrection of Christ, depends the resurrection and redemption of our bodies, the inquiry is reduced, you will perceive, to one of evidence as to a *matter of fact*. And in the decision of a *matter of fact*, as distinct from a *matter of opinion*, speculative enquiries, *a priori* considerations of impossibility are, as we all know, out of place. Jesus Christ did or did not rise from the dead. His resurrection is a fact upon which we can be absolutely certain, as certain as we can be of anything in the world, for it must rest ultimately upon the testimony of the senses as to the existence of sensible phenomena. Now it is not superfluous to remark, though it *ought* to be, that until you demolish the evidence of that *fact*, you may spare all effort to expose the consequent doctrine to

contempt, by drawing imaginary pictures of its impossibility or absurdity.*

With reference then to the fact of Christ's resurrection, we can only give an outline of the evidence, leaving it to the ingenuous student to follow up the investigation,—simply premising that the evidence is unopposed. Counter evidence does not exist.

1. Without now asserting that Jesus *did* rise from the dead, we can, without fear of contradiction, aver that nothing can be more fully proved than that the primitive preachers of Christianity *asserted* that he did. To quote the language of Dr. Paley, "Every piece of Scripture recognises the resurrection. Every Epistle of every Apostle, every author contemporary with the Apostles, of the age immediately succeeding the apostles, every writing from that age to

* In this sentence I am alluding to a small pamphlet published by the Brahmo Samaj against the resurrection of the body. *The Doctrine of Christian Resurrection. A Discourse* read at the Society of Theistic Friends. Calcutta: Jorasauko. 1865. I have not thought the book deserving of much notice in the body of the Lecture, for it is completely answered by the position now taken *viz.* that the resurrection of Christ is a matter of fact, proved by adequate evidences. His ridicule of the doctrine is unmeasured, and would, no doubt, be very damaging if it were only to the purpose. Indeed in many places the terms used would, not unfairly, be denominated grossly abusive. But I am not disposed to blame the writer *very* much on this account. If Christianity be false, by all means let it be proved to be so, and then no terms sufficiently strong could be used, I think, to express our righteous indignation at the injury done us by the imposture. But this writer is open to blame for allowing his dislike of Christianity to overcome his reason and judgment. He has not been at the pains to understand what it was he was going to attack. Surely it would have struck any one of common sense that if the doctrine of the resurrection which is exhibited publicly to the gaze of all on the forefront of the Christian revelation be so replete with absurdities and plain contradictions as he supposes, it would not have been reserved for him to discover them. But, as in page 3, he has admitted the fact that Christ *did* rise from the dead, "The *example* of their Lord and the preaching of the apostles had not succeeded in producing the conviction that the dead should awake &c ;" we may pass by his subsequent attempt to show the absurdity of believing that the dead can rise. If a man with one breath asserts me as a fact that a house is burnt down, I can regard with unruffled equanimity and also incredulity his efforts in the next breath to prove by abstract reasonings, that the house *could not* have been burnt down. Dr Drougsius Lardner adduced many arguments to shew that no steam-ship could cross the Atlantic Ocean, but he admitted that his arguments were nullified when the Great Western steam-ship *did* cross. The writer alludes in terms of contempt to St. Paul's method of proving Christ's resurrection; surely his own method of establishing the immortality of the soul is scarcely unexceptionable. He says page 6. "The indestructibility of the soul is evident—it shall, it must survive the body, for we feel, as well as see it in the eye of reason." I have no wish to be unduly harsh upon the writer, but he might be asked to explain the nature of a "feeling of the indestructibility of the soul" and how it may be known. I have not been fortunate enough to meet with a single person who is conscious of any such extraordinary feeling, either in the "eye of reason," wherever that may be, or any where else.

the present genuine or spurious, on the side of Christianity or against it, concur in representing the resurrection of Christ as an article of His history, received without doubt or disagreement by all who called themselves Christians, as alleged from the beginning by the propagators of the institution and alleged as the centre of their testimony."* In further proof of this point, let me allude to a fact, which, coming under your own observation, cannot be controverted, and which proves with irresistible force the point I am now dwelling upon. This fact is the observance of Sunday as sacred by all bodies of Christians. This day is regarded as holy in commemoration of Christ's resurrection on that day. There never was a period in the History of the Church when this observance was not maintained,—not as a novelty but as a long established custom and in remembrance of that great event. Here, then, is a monument erected by the primitive Christians, seen all over the world at this day, and bearing on its face undeniable witness of this universal belief of this great truth from the very first. I do not see how this observance of the Lord's Day can be rationally accounted for except by admitting the fact not, you understand, of Christ's resurrection, but of the *preaching* Christ's resurrection by the Apostles.

2. Now accepting this fact as indubitable, the question immediately emerges;—What was the reason and motive of their proclaiming Christ's resurrection? And here, before any replies of this question are discussed, a few prefatory remarks on the necessary conditions of a right solution will not be out of place.

In constructing hypotheses, then, in explanation of the Apostles' conduct, I need scarcely say that it is not allowed us to fly in the face of, or wilfully shut our eyes to, those plain natural principles of humanity universally acknowledged as regulative of man's conduct. That is to say, we are not to frame theories which proceed on the assumption that the Apostles of Christ were moral monsters, acting from motives, and aiming at ends, which to us, as human beings, are inconceivable, unintelligible, and unnatural. Whether we regard them as honest or dishonest, philosophers or fools, astute impostors or deluded enthusiasts, we must necessarily admit that at least they were *men*. And if they were *human* beings, their course of conduct, whatever it was, must have been the consequence of motives, and the motives, foolish or wise, prudent or extravagant, must have been such as are *intelligibly* and *conceivably* influential. Again, whatever theory you assume as explanatory of their actions, it must not only be consistent with the laws of humanity, it must be consistent with itself. It is not allowed you, for instance, to assume in one stage of your theory, when it is convenient, that the Apostles were unscrupulous desperate impos-

tors, and then, in another stage of that same theory, to assume, when it is convenient that they were honest deluded enthusiasts. When the Apostles took in hand the enterprise of establishing amongst the murderers of Jesus a belief of his resurrection, you may, if you can, and it does not imply that they were moral monstrosities, suppose that they were either unconsciously deceived themselves, or that they consciously deceived others, but you cannot maintain they were both at the same time.

Premising these remarks, I now venture upon the following assertion;—Looking at Christ's resurrection in whatever aspect it is possible to view it, the advocates of Christianity have triumphantly demonstrated that no theory, that has ever been devised, or that can be devised by disbelievers, can, satisfactorily to reasonable men, account for the course of life adopted by the Apostles. It is maintained that the only rational, satisfactory, and philosophical account of their conduct is that adopted by Christians, *viz.*, that they were *true* men testifying to a *true* fact.

Surely if ever there were a narrative, which bears on its face the stamp of truth, which is substantiated by unexceptionable, concurrent, uncontradicted testimony, which has yielded all the results, moral and religious, which the truth only could be expected to bring about, it is the history of the Resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth from the dead.

His twelve disciples were taken from the mass of common men, simple, honest, of no particular courage, imbued with respect for their civil and ecclesiastical rulers, and yet so destitute of that bravery, which fanaticism or enthusiasm generates, that, at the first brunt of danger, they forsook their master and disowned him. Is it then reasonable, or consistent with universal experience of human nature, to conclude that these very men, when all their hopes centred in their master were dashed to the ground, conceived a plan,—the wildest and most desperate that human brain ever devised, and executed it with a courage unequalled in the world's history,—a plan to deceive the whole Jewish nation, rulers and subjects, all bitterly hostile and keenly suspicious? Are we to believe that these weak irresolute men, in a clear moonlight night, with a city full of people actually broke into a tomb guarded by soldiers—Roman soldiers, and secretly carried off Jesus' body, and then, with a superhuman audacity and wickedness, palmed off upon their powerful foes, a lying story of his resurrection? Knowing that the whole tale was a falsehood, are we to believe that these men, in the very place, and within fifty days of his crucifixion, publicly and in the presence of these inimical authorities, proclaimed again and again his resurrection?—That they had seen him alive, handled him, conversed with him, eaten with him many times?—That, unprotected and defenceless, they denounced these hostile powers as

murderers of the Saviour and Prince of Life? That, facing danger which would have cooled the maddest frenzy, with a calmness of strength unparalleled and unaccountable, they unwaveringly persisted in this story, all the while unsupported by the consciousness of truth?—That, confronting crucifixion and burning,—death in a thousand forms, burdened and weighted with that which makes cowards of the bravest,—the secret consciousness of a lie, they persevered, proclaiming this strange story at home and abroad, to learned and ignorant? Is such conduct *human*? Is it possible? Does not such procedure transcend the limits of experience and the laws of humanity? Men may of course keep up an imposture when there is a prospect of advantage, (for without a motive there is no action,) but what motive can we assign for the Apostle's conduct on this theory? With an invincible certainty of misery and hopeless suffering in this life, and a sure expectation of enduring God's wrath in the next,—what possible explanation can be given of their persistence in proclaiming a lie?

Whatever may be said of other theories, none unquestionably can be more diametrically opposed to the laws of humanity, and necessitates belief in more stupendous wonders than that which proceeds on the assumption that the primitive preachers of Christ's Resurrection, were deceivers. Undeniably, the end and avowed object of the Christian doctrine is to elevate the moral feelings and character, to make men holy and true;—what more gross absurdity, then, can be imagined than that these men taught this doctrine by their lives, evidenced it in their deaths, all the while conscious of a lie in their souls. If ever men were sincere, and exhibited overwhelming proof of their sincerity, it was those who preached to Jews and Gentiles the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

But, if it cannot be even *approximately* made out that the apostles were deceivers, it is far more difficult to suppose that they were deceived.

They were in constant association with their master before his death,—familiar with his personal appearance, and, after his crucifixion, they had every opportunity for identification. The evidence and testimony they had of the identity of Christ's risen body was that which is everywhere accepted, and in reliance upon which the whole business and intercourse of the world proceeds, *viz.*, the testimony of the senses. If, as before mentioned, the resurrection is a matter of fact, there was not, there *could* not be, a possibility of mistake. If the Apostles were deceived in their identification of Jesus *after his resurrection*, what reason can we advance for asserting that they knew him *before his crucifixion*? If they knew him before his death by hearing him, by seeing him, conversing with him; they knew him after death in the same way. If we allege that his appearance after death might be a mere phantom,

or that their senses were imposed upon; then their own bodies were phantoms, and indeed all human bodies are phantoms, and when are we not imposed upon?

Besides, this gratuitous hypothesis of phantoms (itself needing proof,) would be only removing the difficulty one step further back, not solving it. If the testimony of senses be rejected, we are all reduced to phantoms, and the resurrection of a phantom in a world of phantoms presents the same difficulties as the resurrection of a body in a world of bodies.

Now all the objections, I have ever seen against the resurrection of the body, are rested ultimately on the testimony of the senses. It is our *senses* that assure us that the body after death is dissolved and scattered to the four winds, and trusting in the veracity of this witness, the reconstruction of the same material body is held to be impossible. But, if disbelievers accept as true the impressions which sensible phenomena make upon our bodily organs in order to construct objections *against* the resurrection of the body, it is not open to them also to avow the falsehood of these very impressions when testifying to the identity of Christ's risen body. God has so constituted us that these sensible phenomena do force the belief upon our minds of the reality and identity of external existences; the appearances of Christ after his death exhibited all the sensible phenomena and produced all the impressions which his real body must have done, and if these appearances be characterized as illusions we can have no warrant for believing that God *ever* speaks the truth to us by sensible phenomena and through our senses.

The resurrection of Christ from dead is a miracle the magnitude of which we are not anxious to diminish or extenuate. Admitting to the fullest extent that belief in such a violation of a natural law demands evidences of the most cogent character, it is proper to point out that in this matter *disbelief* also is encompassed with difficulties not slighter or less than those which beset the belief. If the resurrection of Christ be examined in all its aspects and consequences, the conviction will be forced upon us that disbelief in this stupendous miracle involves belief in miracles still more stupendous, nay worse, wonders, unintelligible, outrageous, and absurd. It is the infidel we charge with silly incredulity, who with the evidences of the success of the preaching of Christ's resurrection before his eyes, rejects the plain suitable adequate narration given in the history, and resorts to theories which either are violent and irrational transgressions of the laws of humanity, or uproot the very evidence on which he himself takes his stand.

If he says the apostles were *deceivers*, then he must believe that a series of results unparalleled, magnificent, and awe-striking, were achieved by twelve ordinary men, who, in defiance of all law, natural, mental, or moral, and without any conceivably adequate

motive or reason, suffered incredible privations and unimagined tortures in this world, to propagate what they knew in their hearts to be a lie, in the sure and certain hope, according to their own doctrine, of meeting with eternal disgrace and pain in the next.

If he says that they were *deceived*, then again he demolishes the foundations of all belief, drives us to the conclusion that when God speaks to us by sensible phenomena it is only to deceive us, and lastly, suicidally destroys the only proof on which he himself can depend, either in attacking the Christian belief, or defending his own disbelief.

Other arguments converging in the same conclusion can only now be alluded to. Without now adverting to the alleged fact that God bore the primitive preachers witness "with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost according to his will," the proclamation of Christ's resurrection has been universally accompanied with those religious and moral results which might naturally have been expected if it were true, but which are altogether inexplicable supposing it false. The civilizing and ameliorating power of Christianity is clearly displayed in the pages of history; but deny Christ's resurrection, and the fact presents an insoluble problem. Thousands of the holiest and purest men have departed this life, believing Christ to be Lord of the dead and the living, leaving with their last breath their testimony to the strengthening and sanctifying power, which a hearty reception of this great event imparts, but which, if it be a fable, stamps them idolaters, and throws a dark mysterious cloud upon God's moral government which no efforts of reason can dissipate.

Surveying, in short, the varied and multiplied evidences by which this fact is substantiated, the beneficial results, moral and spiritual, which have invariably attended the preaching of it, we may with confidence take our stand upon the resurrection of Christ as a rock of truth, rejection of which, when the proofs are fairly examined, can never be regarded as excusable or blameless.

Taking a step in advance, we are now to consider the resurrection of the body from the vantage ground we have secured. Christ's pretensions to Divine authority were rested on his victory over death; his achievement of that victory cannot be contested. His declarations, therefore, with reference to our future state are to be received with implicit confidence as those of Him who cannot lie. Christ then in virtue of this authority, first proclaimed the resurrection of the dead, and secondly, by his own rising from the dead, established the possibility of the resurrection. Whatever doubt may rise in our mind, or whatever objections drawn from physical or metaphysical sources may be advanced by infidels against this doctrine as *impossible*;—all are now swept away by Christ's resurrection. Jesus *did* rise from

the dead, and it is incumbent upon all to give heed to the fact. Abstract reasonings, *à priori* considerations to show the impossibility of a resurrection, are now simply irrelevant. However improbable beforehand this doctrine might seem, and we do admit its antecedent improbability in the very highest degree; yet *now* with this fact before us, it is no longer irrational to believe that He who raised up Jesus from the dead, "will also raise up us by His own power,"* for that power is nothing less than Divine. Who shall say that that Almighty Power displayed in the works of creation, as well in the starry systems in the heavens marching in their appointed courses, and in the tiniest insects with their exquisitely finished organisms,—who shall doubt that that Power is able to reconstruct our bodily frames and restore our souls to the same domiciles?

Still, admitting that the rehabilitation of the soul with a body does not transcend God's power, many persons well disposed to the Christian faith, are perplexed to think how the *same* body can rise; and when pressed with the objection that the body at death is dissolved, and its atoms become incorporated, may be, with other human bodies, scarcely know what answer to give. Believing in Christ's resurrection, and feeling assured that, as God is true, it is the sure guarantee of the redemption of their own bodies, they cannot but see an apparently fatal distinction between the two facts. Jesus remained only three days in the grave, and his body saw no corruption. The restoration of *his* body was not attended with the same difficulty as regards the *identity*, at least, as is the raising of *theirs* who perished thousands of years ago. The constituent particles of these bodies have long since become assimilated with the dust,—may have entered into the composition of other vegetable and animal structures, and thus have become integral portions of other human bodies. Nay, they may have passed through several such cycles, and have become parts of many human bodies. Allowing the competency of God to raise a body, how is it possible, they say, with these facts before us, there can be a resurrection of the *same* body. These doubts plainly are not unreasonable, and any remarks we can make to clear them up will not be unprofitable.

First of all, one fruitful source of misconception and difficulty is cut off, when the point at issue is clearly stated, for often the very *form* in which the objection is couched is misleading. So much stress is laid upon the dissolution of the *constituent particles* of the body and their absorption into the surrounding matter, that not unfrequently the question is taken to be the identity of these constituent particles, and not, as it really is, the *identity of the body*. Accepting as true, the theory of atoms, (which after all is only a hypothesis

* 1. Cor. VI. 14.

not a demonstrated fact,) a little consideration upon the growth of our own bodies now, will make it clear that bodily identity does not, and never is supposed to consist in the sameness of the particles of which it is composed. Our bodies are in a state of flux. Every hour they are throwing off certain particles, and by mysterious vital energy appropriating and assimilating others, so that, as regards *atoms*, a man, may in the course of an average life, have taken, used, and thrown away several bodies,—and yet it is the common belief of Christians, it is the common opinion of mankind, and it is the common tenet of philosophers, that the man's body was one and the same through the whole period, although the particles were never the same in any two consecutive days. It is then obvious, that when we speak of the identity of the *body* we are speaking of something which is independent of the elementary particles of which it is composed,—and therefore in order to its restoration, it is not at all necessary that the atoms, which at the time of death or at any other time were connected with our bodies, should be connected with the resurrection-bodies. It is not the mere arrangement of particles, however close, which constitutes a body, but their subjection in one organism to a uniting power. So long as that uniting power continues the same, the body may be, at one time great, at another time small; at one time hold a larger number of particles in subjection, at another time fewer; nay, may be restricted to one infinitesimally small particle, and yet preserve its identity throughout. If we keep these facts in mind, we shall see nothing in the phenomena of death, awful as they are, to shut us up to the belief that the resurrection of the body, its sameness unimpaired, is a contradiction, or an impossibility, or an absurdity. All that presents itself to our notice is the cessation of that uniting power to retain its hold over certain portions of the body, but, whether that also is destroyed, or whether it will not again appropriate, assimilate and hold in subjection other matter or not,—these are questions which philosophy from the data at her command cannot answer, either affirmatively or negatively. The vitality of that uniting power *may* continue, and after remaining dormant for an indefinitely long duration, *may* again exert its power in new modes and directions, preserving the identity of the body throughout. For such a state of things involves no contradiction to any principles of which philosophy either physical or metaphysical is cognisant, and cannot be demonstrated to be an impossibility either of reason or of science. The antecedent probability or improbability of such future restoration of the body is admitted, but it is not a matter with which Christians are directly concerned, for the doctrine is not grounded, you will understand, in the principles of natural reason, but in the authoritative declaration of Jesus Christ. To prove its impossibility, we hold, then, to be impossible; to shew

its improbability irrelevant. It rests on its own proofs and a long as those proofs stand firm, as they do now, the doctrine is secure.

But yet, the doctrine being placed on its proper basis, and supported by its own special evidence, it will be found that there are analogies in nature which coincide with it, and confirm its general credibility. Of these, the most obvious and the most close, is the illustration adduced by St. Paul, the germination of seed. "The disorganization of the seed-corn in the ground is complete, and the subsequent plant with stalk and ears, as regards *particles* indeed, is a new and different body, but as regards the *continuousness of the same life*, is popularly and philosophically held to be same. And hence, we may infer that the resurrection-body will bear such a relation to the present body as a tree does to its seed. The spiritual body will be identical with the earthly body in the same way that an oak is identical with an acorn, of which it is the evolution, and to which it is indebted for its being an oak and not a vine or an elm. In some such way, for I do not at all wish to press the analogy too far, our future bodies shall be the same as our present bodies, and yet different. Moreover, the individuality of a seed, or of a human germ, requires for its manifestation only a minute quantity of matter. Let me state the physical fact in reference to a vegetable embryo; the statement, *mutatis mutandis*, will apply equally to the embryo of man. The microscopic researches, then, of modern physiology have shown us that an exceedingly small amount of ponderable matter condenses, and as it were, concentrates in itself the individuality of every germ, vegetable or animal. In other words, the determining power, which, if that germ developes into mature existence, it infallibly develops into an oak, into a vine, into an elm;—or into a butterfly, into an eagle, as the case may be—this determining power, which constitutes the individuality and continuous identity of the mature organism, is originally located in a microscopic atom of matter. The moment that germ begins to develop* it exchanges those primary particles for others, not merely, remember, adding others to itself, but giving away, as it were, its original self piecemeal, whilst, by a process utterly mysterious, the individualizing power is transferred to the new particles, so that months after the grain of wheat is dead and gone, a blade and stem, taking their characters from it, grow green and ripen and finally produce grains identical with the perished one.

It needed all the bulk and weight of matter which have been added between spring and autumn, to secure one single fruitful grain upon the nodding spike of wheat. But the life, at the beginning and end of the cycle has been embodied in the narrow compass

* In the wheat found in the pyramids of Egypt this power had been lying dormant for thousands of years.

of a grain, and the inner essential life of that reposes in a citadel so small that it can barely be seen, and cannot at all be touched analysed or weighed.

It is not magnitude, but continuity of body which the resurrection demands. Death must precede it, but not necessarily destruction of the animal frame.

Enough, then, of matter to embody our individuality and secure for us a continuous corporeal existence, is all that resurrection requires. Let us but imagine that it has pleased God to set apart for each child of man so much of the dust of the earth, *i. e.*, of the chemical elements, as shall form this minimum, but sufficient medium for the incarnation of his individuality; whilst the Creator also prevents those particles forming the individuality of any other human being, although they may transiently enter into the structure of any number of organisms to whom for a season they are given in loan. And when the last trumpet shall awake us, I imagine that those few germ-particles which were sufficient for our embryonic individuality will, unclaimed by any other human being, return to us, and as the true seed of the natural body be raised and changed into the spiritual body.

I have offered you this suggestion but I will not enlarge on it; rather will I entreat you to remember that no theory can rob the the resurrection of its mystery, nor anything but experience of its awfulness, teach us the nature of the inconceivable change which it will make us undergo.*

And we must not imagine that this analogy of the germination and growth of seed, throws more light upon the nature and mode of the resurrection than it really does. Illustration is not proof, and this is but an illustration of the fact, not of the nature, of a resurrection-body. The possibility of the future body being identical with the present, is indeed rendered credible, but as an inspection of the seed corn gives us no indication of the future plant, so our acquaintance with this tenement of flesh and blood, presents no clue to a knowledge of the character and properties of the resurrection-body.

There is a wide chasm between the purest and holiest aspirations of our spiritual nature, and the properties of the house in which it is domiciled. Our present frame is fitted to that part of our nature which we have in common with brutes. It is adapted to an earthly existence. Animal life is its animating principle. It is an animal body consisting of flesh and blood, and susceptible of decay and corruption, needing food, air, and rest. But, though sown in corruption and weakness, it will be raised incorruptible, glorious, powerful, spiritual.

* Dr. Geo. Wilson's *Religio Chemicæ*.—pp. 382—385.

Jesus Christ our Saviour has passed through all the stages of human existence to the Majesty on High, and is now the object of devout affection to all who in humility and faith yield their souls to his quickening and formative spirit. Although we know not, and cannot now conceive aright, with what glorious properties our frames, when redeemed from sin and death, shall be endowed, yet our faith, based upon an *actual experiment*, clings with holy affection to the *man* Christ Jesus and is thus, even when facing the king of terrors, buoyed up with the conviction grounded in love that he "who was made in all points like unto ourselves" will change our vile bodies that they may be fashioned like unto his glorious body according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.* Jesus Christ is even now in Heaven clothed about with a human body, a body of glory,—in harmony with the Holy Spirit within, and adapted, in all respects, to the situation without. So also, conformed to that exemplar, our resurrection body, disconnected from all belonging to the economy of the present animal life will be attuned to the rational, nobler part of our natures,—the spirit,—and the spirit quickened and inhabited by God the Holy Ghost. Hence its animating principle being the spirit, it is appropriately termed a *spiritual* body. And undoubtedly identical with our present animal bodies, and withal material, it will yet be invested with other attributes, and mightier powers transcending our conceptions;—the organ, and becoming habitation of man's sanctified soul.† No longer harassed with the "body of this death" which ever opposes and thwarts the Soul's holiest aspirations, we shall be clothed with an ethereal-structure, in harmony with the soul, fitted for the celestial sphere in which it is to move, and suited for the high employment of serving God, and showing forth His praises.

But the imperative requirements of truth demand that we should not lose sight of the fact that the resurrection has alternative issues. After death, the judgment. All shall, by virtue of Christ's risen humanity, be raised with their bodies, and, contemporaneous with the resurrection, is the judgement. God's decision, sharp and just, shall shear, like a stroke of lightning, between the two classes,—those who now are partakers of the life-giving spirit, and those who now reject it.

What will be the contexture of the bodies of those souls, who have consciously and wilfully rejected God's healing grace, we are not informed. The resurrection of all men is certain, the judg-

* Phil. III. 21.

† The idea that the spiritual body means a body constructed of spirit, which is the idea maintained and ridiculed by the Brahmo Tract writer, does not exist anywhere, as far as I know, except in the writer's own imagination.

ment of all men is sure, the redemption of the body is secured, to one class by the transforming agency of God's spirit, soul and body being alike fitted to the sphere in which they are to live and move. But of the nature of the change upon the bodies of the other class,—how the material structure will correspond to the lost and ruined condition of the soul, we have not the means of forming even a conjecture. And apart from the declarations of Scripture, or from what may be deduced from it by plain inevitable inference we cannot, and we have no wish to advance a single step. Only let it not be weakly and groundlessly imagined that the resurrection of the wicked to condign punishment is a superstitious delusion, to be dismissed at once as inconsistent with our idea of a Merciful and Loving Father. Awfully mysterious it is, but sad and gloomy experience of the fact in this world, irresistibly convinces us that sin, and its necessary result, misery,—must be reconcileable with God's character, whatever may be our *ideas* of God's character;—and the condition of man's averted will remaining unaltered, it is difficult to perceive why it should not be reconcileable hereafter,—except indeed our *wish* that it may not be. It is not the degree, the quantity of evil in God's moral government, which is the dark mystery,—but its *existence*.

There has been little room, in conducting the argument of this lecture, for making any appeal to your feelings, nor have I had any other intention than to exhibit the Christian doctrine, in its grounds, proofs, and consequences, as they are revealed in the Bible, trusting in the power of the truth itself, when fairly applied to the soul, to produce its appropriate results, in suitable convictions and emotions. It is the object of the Christian minister, as it was of St. Paul, “by manifestation of the truth to commend himself to every man's conscience in the sight of God.”*

In the same spirit of confidence I venture earnestly to press upon your careful consideration, as directly rising out of the Lecture, the difference in the estimate of human nature which Christianity presents from that which deistic philosophy exhibits.

It is not unusual to decry Christianity because it assumes human nature to be ruined, shattered and depraved, incapable naturally of pleasing God, or of earning reward at His hands; and in opposition to the Gospel, to exalt deism as taking a more enlightened and nobler view of human nature, less humbling to our natural pride, and more congenial to human feelings.

Deistic theories do attribute to human nature more in respect of *present* powers and capacities than Christianity accords, and—much more also than history and our daily experience confirm. Yet they can afford no explanation of the divorce, of which every one is cognisant, between our ideas of holiness and our actual achieve-

ments, nor yet throw any light upon the intention of these holy aspirations, which are apparently so fruitless and abortive. God's plan of redemption revealed in the Bible alone gives the key to unlock the mystery. Revelation commences with assigning to human nature a dignity far transcending what present phenomena warrant, but yet it does not hide the fact of our present corruption and subjection to sin. Our inheritance being forfeited, our will averted, it is declared to us that, at the prompting of a love which passeth all understanding, our flesh was taken up into the person of God and is now and for ever one with Him. Jesus Christ, by his spotless life and vicarious death accomplishing his own salvation and our redemption, is now *in our nature* exalted to the mansions of heaven.

Our nature in its present state does not seem indeed, to the physical eye, to be endowed with any glory;—and when we gaze at the magnificent vastness of the material creation, the conviction of our apparent insignificance is forced in upon our minds and we are ready to cry with the Psalmist,—“when I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and stars which thou hast ordained,—what is man that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that thou visitest him.”* But the revelation of the glory of man in the exaltation of Jesus clears away these hard thoughts of unbelief, and offers a worthy and satisfying object for our loftiest desires and hopes. We may with gratitude and a deepening conviction of our unworthiness meditate upon the inconceivably great honour conferred upon our race in the incarnation and dignity of the son of God. In that glory you and I and all men are interested; and may, by voluntarily surrendering our souls to the quickening power of his grace, be partakers of it. His spirit, reanimating our dead souls, shall be in them a “well of water springing up into everlasting life.” Our bodies and our souls renewed and glorified, shall be assimilated to his, who, exalted to God's throne on High, now governs all things.

Nor need we fear, that a true conception of the real nature and origin of our dignity, will encourage the working of sinful pride. It is the very magnificence of the privilege, the immeasurable extent of God's love in Christ, which is the surest antidote to that pernicious principle. A right conception, rooted in faith, of our exaltation and inheritance in glory through Christ, will of itself engender humility and lowly-mindedness. The bare mention of the glory and worth stamped upon our nature in being taken into indissoluble union with the Godhead, will bring home the conviction that it cannot be of our merit, but must be of God's kindness, that we are so honoured. However highly and falsely we may

*. Ps. VIII. 3,

estimate our own worth, no one ever wildly imagined, that he *deserved* to be elevated to that pinnacle of greatness, to which God's free grace exalts all, who cling by a living faith to their Divine Head, and Redeemer. It is when we are convinced that God's goodness is incomparably beyond our merits, inexpressibly transcends our boasted deservings, that the lightning of conviction burns up our frail perishable self-righteousness, and, overpowered with a sense of our unworthiness, we cry out, from the bottom of our hearts "Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name give the glory." The revelation of God's *goodness* teaches the lesson of genuine humility. The Lord Jesus Christ exalted "far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but in that which is to come",* delights to make himself known to us as our brother. Let us grasp this fact with true undoubting faith, and then we shall fall on our knees, we shall be humbled in the dust, at God's love and grace to sinful men.

"O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out!†

* Eph. I. 21.

† Rom. XI. 33.

